

Says of a Bahenian.

Wm. R. Woodward.

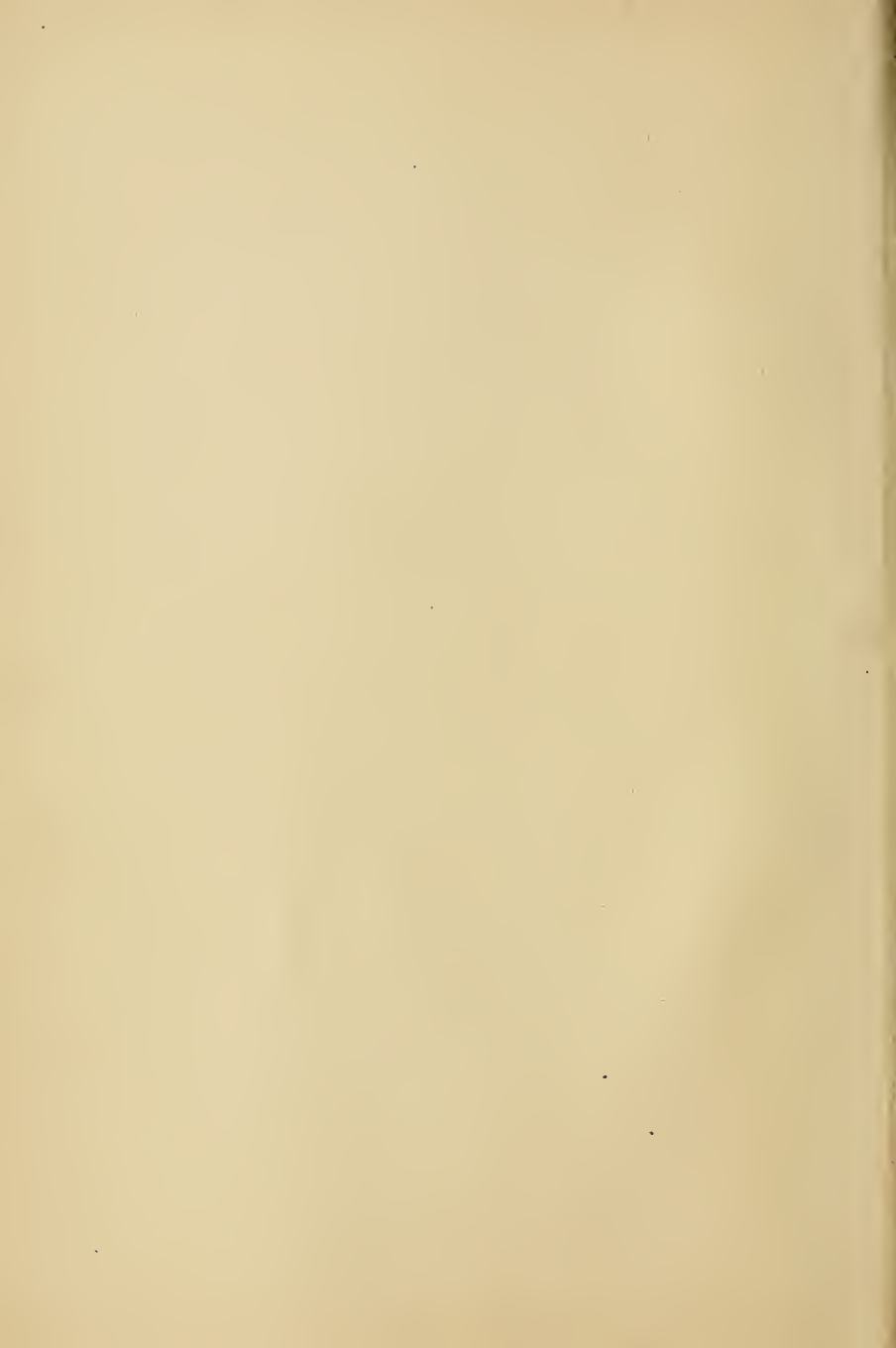
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Scott R. Woodward.





THE LAYS

of a

BOHEMIAN.

BEING SOME OF THE METRICAL CONCEITS

OF
SCOTT R. SHERWOOD.

33

So, when my Lays before the Carp—
My leaves unto the wind—
I fling, remember that my Harp
Is tuned to hymn my mind,
In mood as it reflects a Soul—
Not your's, but God's alone—
Of which is cradled here first Foal,—
If needs, let God atone!

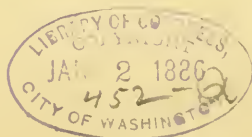
Bohemian Song, (p. 8.)

BRENTANO BROS.,

NEW YORK.

5 UNION SQUARE.

1885.



3 ded.

THIRD (AUTHOR'S) EDITION.

752814
G43
1885-6

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WOOD & BLONDEL, PRINTERS,
NEW YORK,

Inscribed

TO THE
INSPIRATIONS OF THE THOUGHT,
AND THE
ASSOCIATIONS OF THE NAME,
OF
ANNA FRANCES.

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PROEM.

*Apollo's hest,
In hour of rest,
To tune and strike my lyre,
I here obey—
The dull work-day
Abandoning for higher
Paths than are trod
By crown or clod
In sequestrated home—
My fancies free
From apogee
To flood to reckless roam—*

*Blue skies to skim,
Broad oceans swim,
Bold mountain crests surmount ;
Through forests glide—
On Phoebus 'stride—
Nor verse, nor metre count,
Since weed and floss
Each other cross
In all life's journey through—
Faint to descry
Dull human eye
The false from that is true.*

My Day of Rest,
My soul's bequest
To my adored—the themes
My heart approves
Or spirit moves—
Of thought the fruit, or dreams—
I sing, and sing—
Aye wandering—
By no restrictions bound,
Content to soar
Or fall, not more
Responding for than found.

My hours I choose
In sweet recluse
For meditation's gifts,
When dulcet spring
The chimes that ring
From grander domes and rifts
Than steeples pierce,
Or bishops, fierce,
With bulls and canons reach—
The domes that glow
With sacred flow
From Lights Jove's Essence preach.

THE LAYS OF A BOHEMIAN.



BOHEMIAN SONG.

I am a true Bohemian;
I scoff at rote or rule—
Deem myself good as any man,
No more or less a fool—
Live where I am, fare as I may—
Am pleased with any lot—
Remember friends, and never lay
A grudge for them are not.

I love fair face, wherever met;
Sweet-heart I love still more,
And pity all who never yet
Of pity have found store;
For love and pity true are kin,
And all my sorrow here
Is for the many never win
From fellow-kind a tear.

I favor give to them I like,
And take from them who please
To give to me because I strike
As one who can appease
The wish of sympathy—that glows
In every human heart,
Yet fondest utterance bestows
On like's responsive part.

I press my views on no man's glass,
Nor reflect his from mine,
Since God's intent, 'tis plain, alas!
For reasons wise, divine,
Was not, in his broad universe,
To make twin moon or sun,
Two minds to think, two bards to verse,
Two hearts to beat—as one.

I drink the breezes softly waft,
And gratefully exhale;
With awe, the lightning's gleam and shaft
Watch, flashing through the gale;
View, pensively, the torrents roar,
The waves, mid-ocean, toss,
The stars the azure gemming o'er,
And feel there is no loss.

Aye! Everything to me is gain,
For everything seems new—
And always new, tho'seen again,
And grand, from any view,
Because a true Bohemian
Am I, and make my nest
Where'er I chance, and let no man
Abridge my heart's behest—

To rove the desert, sail the seas,
Mid' waste, or peopled town—
Oft lingering in climes where freeze
The veins, or insects drown—
In humming myriads—the air,
Imbred by torrid wave,
Or in old sepulchres that glare
With stones the eras lave.

And wheresoe'er I stray or wait,
Or tarry, feast, or love,
At matin's dawn, or vesper late,
I never care to move
One pace beyond where I may rest,
Or rise, or list, or hie—
Since every line my lot the best
For me, e'en when I die.

* * *

So, when my Lays before the Carp—
My leaves unto the wind—
I fling, remember that my Harp
Is tuned to hymn my mind,
In mood as it reflects a Soul—
Not your's, but God's alone—
Of which is cradled here first Foal,—
If needs, let God atone !

I.

* * *

Now calm reflections rule the hour—
Our thoughts upraise to heights
Whence soar the truths that brightly flower,
Amid earth's wastes and blights,
To teach the grandeur of the soul,
Reveal our better part,
Lift from the quicksand and the shoal
Of life the surging heart.

* * *

A Poet's Introspect, (Page 17).

MY DAY OF REST.

My day of rest is not constrained by special creed;
No sect, assuming God's prerogative, my grace
May claim; denominations, none a title-deed
Can forge to swerve my conscience from its altar-
place.

My Sabbath's recreation, as befits my mood,
Is found beneath the shelter of my tree and vine,
Where my best hopes, desires, all that in me is
good
Plead my true cause most potently to Eye
Divine.

Here, in the shadow of my oaks, whose stature grand,
Whose massive trunks, far-reaching limbs, and
foliage dense
Have spread a canopy, contrived by nature's hand,
Behold my church—of broadest trust, of least
pretense.

No architect my temple has been hired to build;
For it no priests, from rich or poor, alms beg or
force;
At eve, or mass, ne'erless, with worshipers are filled
Its corridors, aisles, naves—with a sublime con-
course

Of myriads of moving, breathing miniatures—
Of God's conceptions living semblances—de-
signed
For spheres as useful and complete as earth's or
your's,
Tho' not to rituals conformed or rites confined.

I draw my inspiration—my encouragement
In my deep faith—from all these varied forms,
the orbs
Which give them life and heat, the clouds their
nourishment,
The soil that all our being, effort, hope absorbs.

My choir—the strain of birds, the droning of the
bees,
The frog's bass-croak, the hoot-owl's monody,
the low

Of kine, the bleat of lambs, the neigh of steeds, the
breeze
That wafts—e'er sigh or moan—as winds or
zephyrs blow.

My preacher—a wee child, who innocently sings
Hertuneful carol, plucking daisies from the green,
Or gambols with her kitten, or in hammock swings
So cheerily, I peer—at risk of being seen.

As sheltered by a fir, I scan her face, and eyes
Of violet—beaming thought and love—to heav'n
turned,
So 'rapt her spirit seems beyond the stars would
rise,
She frames a sermon wisely-lessoned, if not
learned.

My little priest—inspired by nature's soulful text—
Exhales an incense sweet with Faith, Hope,
Charity;—
How happy, all mankind, like her! How rarely
vexed
Their courses, could they guileless dwell in
parity!

If I nor bow, nor bend my knee, nor clasp my
palms

In prayer, I feel a yearning which God may
have read

With his omniscient eye:—For all I crave the
balms

Our purest years would yield the living and the
dead.

The wish divine doth spring—so tenderly, I pray :

Yon spotless soul, irradiating gentleness,

All gladness, mercy, good the young alone display,

May virtue guard, truth save, and circumstances
bless !

MY 'SCUTCHEON.

My 'Scutcheon is my Heart—
 Borne close within my breast,
Whence it can none impart—
 Save me—its seal and crest;
Its priv'lege ne'er to start
 At aught save God's behest—
It is a kingly chart,
 Aye serving me the best.

It is my mark and sign—
 My mark and sign alone;
For ev'ry error mine
 It only can atone;
To me the Right Divine
 Within its tendrils grown;
And no man may opine
 If it be mild or stone.

My father could not give—
It came to me from God.
My son I cannot leave
When I beneath the sod.
For me it may conceive
Alone—or soothe, or prod,
Or hate, or love, or grieve—
Control'd by no man's nod.

As no two things alike,
Or ever known to be—
Beware! The hand would spike
The coat design'd my tree.—
Beware! Who'd dare to strike
From me its blazonry.—
Beware! Who'd forge a dike
To stem its floods—e'er free!

A POET'S INTROSPECT.

How varying the moods that move
The pulses of the brain—
Through chords supremely touched by love,
Or frets with hate that strain—
Through meditation's solemn trance
Or fancy's lightsome pace,
As pranks and humors lead the dance
Or with vagaries chase.

Now calm reflections rule the hour—
Our thoughts upraise to heights
Whence sown the truths that brightly flower,
Amid earth's wastes and blights,
To teach the grandeur of the soul,
Reveal our better part,
Lift from the quicksand and the shoal
Of life the surging heart.

Then sweet emotions, tinged divine
By heaven's chast'ning breath,
Throb o'er the arbors that entwine
Our hopes—in life and death,
Yield blossoms that enchant and thrall,
Waft perfumes that diffuse
Love's subtle incense throughout all
The harpings of the muse.

Next, brief conceits the mind invade
And capture to express
Trite theories, or theses staid,
Or clamors for redress
Of wrongs and errors by the plane
Of worldly squares and rules,
Not heeding how diseased the grain
Of sense in human fools.

Or chirping fancies frisk and leap
From idle whims, and seize
The effervescing thoughts that sweep
The skies, o'er gale or breeze—
Or whirl with eddies, buff with tide,
Or pierce the vapid mists,
Or in the coach of humor ride,
Or mime in comic lists.

Or bubbling quirks the surface rise,
To ripple for a trice,
And bring a smile to saddened eyes—
A moment loose the vice
That shuts from sympathy its kin
Or fellowship with mirth—
Evoking transports that begin
To mold athwart their birth.

Or wild caprices, with their fumes
And vapors, wierdly glow
Above the hum of labor's looms,
Yet far the stars below—
In frolic verse, or rollic rhyme,
Wild warbles fife, or freaks
Fantastically ring on chimes,
'Mid laughter's gleeful shrieks.

Or satire, musing Damascene,
Hypocrisy lays bare,
And falsehood pricks with blade so keen
That honesty seems fair,
Sweet virtue for a moment blest—
Alike for drones and plods,
Rare truth aroused from stubborn rest,
The scale of justice God's.

YOUR HEAVEN, AND MINE.

Your bliss in hope subsists, in contemplation mine;
Your paradise, of fruits to bear, a vision grows,
While on my past the radiance of heav'n bestows
A charm—illu'ming garlands oft the tombs entwine.

Supremest joy to me experiences reveal—
In friendship, that shall, with my faculties,
endure—
In love, haloed by confidences that ensure
A trust so perfect no vague myst'ries may conceal.

Seek, if you please, in the hereafter your repose;
But strive not me to wean from my content.
On raptures felt my reverie can dwell intent—
Not heeding, through the shades, what life doth
not disclose.

FAITH.

Every thing and thought doth breed—

Sure as man or beast;

Not a breath our pulses speed

Dies, e'en life hath ceased.

* * *

Every blessing, for its meed

Grateful thrill, at least;

Every sorrow by the seed

Of cruelty increased;

Every penny lost to greed

Some poor waif doth feast;

Every whim, tho' none may heed,

Hath some fate capriced.

Landscapes grand, and glowing skies

From the canvass spring;

Yearning hearts, and soulful sighs

Muses move to sing;

Deeds, from noble thoughts that rise,

Eloquence doth wing;

Tyrant's heel, and heroes' cries

Freedom's echo bring.

Guillotine and gibbet spawn

Criticism's staves;

From the nightly flagon dawn

Thieves, assassins, knaves;

Wanton souls and bodies fawn
Dens that mis'ry laves,
Bitterer, with tears, than drawn
E'er by hallowed graves.

In our dream, or waking trance—
Joys and dreads intense;
Yield the race, the chase, the dance
Foils for reason's fence;
Not a movement or a glance
Void of consequence;
Gleams a ray the sun's bright lance—
Cast a shadow thence.

* * *

Yet o'er heaven's necromance
Spreads a vail so dense,
None may know if Supreme Chance
Guideth more than Sense.

MY THANKSGIVING.

Thanks to my Heart!—It grateful drinks God's air—

Quick-throbbing to the glance of love, and voice
Of liberty—all things beholding fair

In nature, and in man—when doth rejoice
Man in his manhood, scorning all untruth,

When from injustice quiver and recoil
His thoughts, and when he doth defy, not ruth
Of words or blows, the touch would virtue soil.

Thanks to my Soul!—Content it lingers here—

From the productive soil of this rich earth
Gleaning the food—the sweets no other sphere

Can wean me from before my second birth
May follow all I know of life or death,

Or care to know of things beyond my life,
Whose fitful scenes, and thoughts and acts—each
breath

New drawn—prove me with little knowledge rife.

Thanks to my Body!—It would not ascend

To sun, or moon, or twinkling star, or soar
Beyond sparks visible, or yet descend

The bowels of the world, to mine and score

The notches by which greed would aid me gain
The luxuries to mark me—from my kind—
A gilded something set apart to stain
And blot the true fraternity of mind!

Thanks to my Senses!—All of them revolt
At ev'ry custom that impedes their right
To make my lot a joy, or that would molt
My freedom to indulge—false caste despite—
The fruits of labor, love and honest toil,
And to resent perversion of God's law
By superstition's torch, or tyrant's coil
Alluring man's cupidity and awe.

Thanks to Myself!—I am that which I am—
Nothing higher or lower, more or less—
Nothing shorter or taller, tho' you damn
My size, or criticise my shape, and guess
I might, or ought to think, or do, or seem
The very opposite of that I love
The best—MY OWN TRUE SELF, the which can gleam
But one Light e'er eclipsing—that of JOVE!

ILLUSION'S LESSON.

Empty as an echo,
Hollow as a sound,
Ev'ry thought and action
Compass'd by the bound
Of this world's horizon,—
Nor will e'er be found
Truth, save fate hath somewhere
Brook'd of hallow'd ground.

Ev'ry cloud that crosses
The ethereal blue,
Ev'ry wind that courses
Plain or forest through,
Carryeth delusion—
Howsoe'er we view
Cause or aim—illusion
Hiding all is true;

Making sweet with incense
What is often blight;
Honest feeling intense
To defeat the right;
Pious vows a pretense
To obscure the sight;
Life, but experience—
Teaching : "God is Might."

ABOVE THE CLOUDS.

I.

How dwarf'd and paltry seem the ways, how
cramp'd the views of men,
Their poverty of scope how mean, their aims
how desultore,
As from the boulder'd mountain's cleft my
thoughts, untrammel'd, soar
A moment toward Infinity, then droop below again!

II.

Oh! That I might here plant my hearthstone—far
above the clouds,
My home might rear behind the mists envailing
man's trite schemes,
My poor desires uplift to where my life would
flit in dreams
Far sweeter than the pleasures that delude earth's
fickle crowds!

III.

Or that I might, o'er ocean thence, be borne—to
island lone,
My bark abandon there enwrecked, fast found-
er'd in the sand,
By surf encircled evermore, so should my heart
withstand
Blind passion's petty groveling—in envy's emmet
zone!

IV.

Cast me amid the waves and breakers, 'neath the
lightning's glare,

If they may serve emancipate me from earth's
tiring jars

And bickerings, so waste that—no less by sun's
blaze, than stars'

Pale gleam, on life at rest—man's labor seems of
fruit shorn bare!

V.

No prize the world can designate to tempt ambi-
tion's greed,

Or opiates the subtlest skill extract to sense
beguile,

Can charm me from this crest, whence leaps my
soul tow'rd heaven's smile—

Spreading so omnipresently, revealing all I need.

ALTHAZAR'S GIFT.

There is an intuition in the minds of some so keen
It seems a direct gift from God—by which are
read the signs
That mark the inner hearts of other men—through
which are seen
The motives of their surface acts—their souls'
work and designs.

What by Althazar's circle oft is termed satiety
Is but his native shrinking from the traits he
doth surprise
In his own kith—retarding quest of their society
Or haunts—their conflicts or their friendships—
aid or enterprise.

A glance—by others unobserved: a frown, a curve,
a bend;
A voice—its modulation or inflection; simplest gait
Or gesture: e'en a posture, or an attitude, will
send—
As if clairvoyantly—to his quick consciousness
its fate.

'Tis not a gift to prove its owner less than his poor
kind
A man, or more a god; nor is't a gift to make
one proud,
As evidence of higher faculty of soul or mind;
But 'tis a gift that may not be contemned,
where'er endowed.

If 'tis a cheerful boon, Althazar never vauntingly
Confesses it; for it hath made him strange and
reticent

When he would not seem so. Despite himself, it
tauntingly

Hath warned him, thus: "How guilty they!
This one, how innocent!"

"Gentle, the heart there masked by face of cold
severity;

"Loving and kind, that frugal pair so queru-
lously plod;

"Generous, he admonishing with such asperity;

"Deep-stirred with faith, yon pleader who de-
clines to sue your God.

"Cruel and vain is that dispenser of sweet charity;

"False, this unctuous wearer of the church's
livery;

"Base and designing, yonder patriot—with rarity

"Of eloquence, a franchise wins each word's
delivery."

In ev'ry human phase, Althazar's cleverness detects
The outward indices of the real inwardness; true
worth

From shams and counterfeits discries; from visible
effects

The cause of men's perversion traces—ante-
dating birth.

Tho' his quick impress may debar man's fellowship,
methinks

Althazar may have won a closer fellowship with
God.

At all events, God's haunts are his—God's breath
his bosom drinks,

Expires, nor feels the privilege of chastisement
a rod.

He walks the solitary glen, the lonely wood and
beach;

He crosses desert plains, and climbs the deso-
lated crest;

The stars and systems, skies and clouds he scans;
and he doth reach

Nearest the TRUTH, that underscores all things,
and is the BEST—

THE TRUTH, that bids us pity, when we judge—
when we condemn,

Forgive—to leave to God such vengeance as he
wills—to plead

From him no mercy not his own— small favor hope
from them

Bred to man's traits of treachery and greed.

MEMORY'S CHOICE.

With memory of pleasure lost
 Affection barbs its arrow—
 Admonishing the heavy cost
 Of joy life drapes with sorrow.
 Happy, they only, who have known
 No succor from the burden
 Chaining men to their lots, which groan
 With sweat—of bliss the guerdon.

For hope hath he of better fate—
 Not having known to prosper,
 Or having felt to speculate
 He must upon disaster;
 Whilst he who trembles lest, perchance,
 Success may not be lasting,
 Is ever quiv'ring 'neath the lance
 Prosperity is blasting.

Remembrance, rescuing from the strife
 A sermon, gravely preaches :
 The only comfort plucked from life
 Unshamed reflection teaches.
 Not giddy pleasure's chronicle
 Is it man, happiest, views;
 Looking from heaven's pinnacle,
 Our virtuous deeds we choose.

MUSINGS; FROM A PHILOSOPHER'S
PORTFOLIO. *a.*

I.

How perfect, tow'rd the end, our knowledge of the
cause,

From which we've felt, unwarned, the bittering
effect!

Tho' better late, than ne'er, we come to recollect
And heed our intuitions— than all written laws

More serious and just—since human retrospect
Must, wise, concede that Destinies—unseen—
direct;

Else, why in hopeless paths advance, in hopeful
pause?

II.

If there live they who have not struggled 'gainst
the wave

Of Fate's decree, such here can never apprehend
The blunders, crosses, sorrows Providence may
send

To change the heart misled, the mind from error
save.

For who, taught by life's checks and burdens,
will contend

That God, however chastening, does not intend
A discipline, to each most needed, for the grave?

III.

Long in the mists and shadows do we strive and
grope

To conquer obstacles not e'en the spheres can
move;

To justify opinions trial must approve,
Until, our judgment yielding, we attain a hope
That we may follow—since we cannot cut—a
groove

For our due journeying, upon ways far above
The circumspect of man—beyond blurr'd mortal
scope.

IV.

And when, at the declining stage, our past we
view—

Touching its errors, battles, mysteries, regrets,
By score of impulse, passion, self-love—worldly
frets,—

Contrasted with what conscience ever weighed as
true,

Our being, actions, thoughts, desires should
seem but debts,

On life's short ledger balanced by the grand
assets

Of being privileged to be, to think, to strive, to
bravely do.

THE PUZZLE.

Pray, what is wrong? And what is right?

If what our hearts impel

Must oft be hid from human light

Because the fates befel

That like from like, by chance, should be—

Through no device of ours—

Diverged and crossed before frail we

Could estimate our powers—

Our powers or gifts—of thought, of love,

Our strength to do, to check

The motives, actions, aims that move

This sphere—to joy or wreck

Our destinies, and in the end

Leave, yet unsolved, unkenn'd

If our first choice or ways best tend

Life's course to smooth or rend?

II.

* * *

Then sweet emotions, tinged divine
By heaven's chast'ning breath,
Throb o'er the arbors that entwine
Our hopes—in life and death,
Yield blossoms that enchant and thrall,
Waft perfumes that diffuse
Love's subtle incense throughout all
The harpings of the muse.

* * *

A Poet's Introspect, (Page 18).

MY SHRINE.

My shrine is at the feet of her
From whom fire, tempest, flood in vain,
Nor all the storms in space astir,
Can separate my soul—whose fane
She pillars with her fay.

My goddess—lithe as dreams disclose
Or in the dome of heaven wings—
More vivid on my image grows,
Fresh rapture to my longing brings
With ev'ry new-born day.

Her features—than Madonna's none
With charity more mildly light—
Encourage hope I may atone
For heedless act or wand'ring flight
Ere blest by her kind sway.

Her step—more graceful tripped no queen
Of orient or fairy land,
In visions famed by poet seen—
I so adore I'd kiss the sand
Where its soft glance would stay.

Her eyes! My God! Thy spark divine
Alone the mind's profounds may spring
With power, by fate denied to mine,
To faintly sound the hopes that cling
To their exalting sway.

Than form, or feature, motion, eye,
More ravishing by far there gleam
From her pure spirit thoughts so high
Above earth's bounds, my life's a dream
How best their wish obey.

For ev'ry inspiration sweet
Drawn from this sphere—by her made heav'n,
So grateful I, no due seems meet
Essayed in words. Love strength hath giv'n
My heart to never stray
From her—my soul to pray
To none save her, alway.

I HAVE BEEN LOVED.

My garb is plain—
Of fabric poor, and coarse, my well-worn coat—
 Glazed by the rain
And sun, my cap, as idlers all may note—
 My shirt undressed
By starch or gloss—by tie nor ruffle decked;
 Yet I am blessed
With joy few hearts, 'neath royal robes, e'er
 recked—

From faith, sublime :
That I was loved, loved truly
 Once, aye, once
 Upon a time.

My form, now bent,
Was then erect as any forest tree;
 My breath, short spent,
Then filled a chest exhaling cheerily

Wild trills of mirth,
Or chants of praise, or ballads melting love,
Ere soared from earth
The echo of my soul—the stars above—
With song sublime :
That I was loved, loved truly
Once, aye, once
Upon a time.

Ne'er wail nor weep
I—sad and lone; for I would not exchange
The furrows deep
My features plow, the glist'ning hairs that range
My locks, erst brown,
Now thinned by grief and care, since proudest king
Would barter crown
To gain the peace of love—the joy I sing—
The faith sublime :
That I was loved, loved truly
Once, aye, once
Upon a time.

I labor now—
I labored then; but she was at my side,
And on her brow,
And in her eyes my hope could then abide

By signs that gave
Encouragement, by smiles that brought repose;
Yet I am brave,
(For destiny—not we—our fortunes chose,)
Through faith sublime :
That I was loved, loved truly
Once, aye, once
Upon a time.

I sometimes long—
But, wherefore?—since, when toiling, mine the gift
Of sweetest song
Ere muses breathed, or minstrel harped, to lift
Man's soul beyond
The chains that bind it here, as in a vice,
To grim despond,
The gift of knowing all that's worth the price
Of Earth's few score—
The truth sublime :
That I was loved, loved truly
Once, aye, once
Upon a time—
Hence, evermore.

LOVE.

Fate's labor vain to rear a wall
 'Twixt loves divine,
 Or crush the shrine
Whereon twain souls have found their thrall.

Paths may diverge like hearts afar—
 Their hopes yet near;
 For cloud nor bier
Can from true love obscure its star.

It haunts the busy work-day hour,
 The bed of dreams,
 First matin's beams,
The calm amid which vespers low'r.

Wild ocean billows may career,
 Or deserts burn
 Between, yet turn
No eddies to awaken fear;

Since ever found, close-hovering
 With love, bright gleams
 From purest streams
 That spring the cold earth's covering—

Gleams that, once mirrored, cannot fade—
 Their gift : To live—
 Sweet light to give
 The soul—when all beside in shade.

LOVE'S PSYCHOLOGY.

Love whispers its sweet messages
Above the storms of life
So tranquilly, no presages
Can rouse a dread of strife.

No warning doth it ever heed—
So blind affinity;—
It recks ne'er space, nor time, nor speed—
Its bounds infinity.

It fears no danger, sees no cloud—
Its happy fate to be
So self-absorbed, no clamor loud
Can break its ecstasy.

One only language doth it know—
Not spoken by the lip;
One only sign need it e'er show—
And oft'nest that by slip—

Through tell-tale eyes, to prove their deeps
Reflect a wakened soul—
Whence to its mate God's emblem leaps,
Two hearts to mold ONE WHOLE.

LOVE'S RESPONSE.

Love ne'er denies—it gives,
And asking, giveth more—
Since love, by yielding, lives,
Receiving, adds its store.

Love feeds upon the kiss
That thrills its counterpart,
And finds its home, its bliss
Its mate's affinite heart.

It craves its own caress
While seeming to accede, .
And hath the gift to bless
When most the pow'r to lead.

Unsought, Love's answer : “ Use ! ”
Its only thought, to give—
Its song, eternal muse :
“ For thee, my peace to live ! ”

Love ne'er can love refuse—
Responding : “ Aye, for aye ! ”—
Its chant, eternal muse :
“ For thee, my balm to die ! ”

THE MISSING NOTES.

Melodiously through the air—

From harp, and violin, and flute—
Float strains so pure that pain and care
Should seem exiled, and sorrow mute.

Anthems they play—from Mozart muse—
Aspiring harmonies so sweet,
The mind, entranced, might well refuse
Life's irksome wail again to meet.

Oh! Symphonies sublime, that breathe—
So far raised o'er this world's travail,
With smiles ye might the angels wreath—
Why is't for me your splendors fail?

A key, alas! is wanting here—
The nightingale cannot restore.
The tend'rest notes reach not my ear,
Nor on earth will they evermore.

More thrilling than motet divine—
How happy, could I hear her voice!
'Twill not descend from heaven's shrine
Save my freed soul to raise—rejoice.

OUR TRYST.

Can'st tell me what is here
To cause my nerves vibrate,
And make—as I draw near—
My heart so palpitate?

Would'st say, the linden tree—
On which are fixed my eyes?
Quite like—since thou know'st me
All nature's boons to prize.

Nay!—Then dost think the bench,
That in its shade holds place,
My normal veins could blench,
And pallid hue my face?

Nor would'st believe the brook—
Cool-winding just below
The terrace, whence we look—
Might make me tremble so?

Nor yet, the nonce, suppose
God's clear, calm sky, above
This refuge for repose,
Could my whole being move?

Ah! Love hath never, then,
Thy wretched heart inspired ;
Or quickly should'st thou ken
By what my soul is fired !

Wherever lingered we,
In those delightful days
Of passion's infancy,
Showered heav'n its brightest rays.

First love's geography—
Than your whole world's—hath made
More legible to me
Yon copse, and tree, and shade !

The azure realms that crown
These sheltering branches, green—
The hillside sloping down
To yonder spring-bed's gleen—

The seat—where once reclined
Her form I worshiped more
Than e'er it was divined
Man had the pow'r before—

Her eyes—that ruled my soul
By glances, which no muse
Can e'er presume extol—
My mem'ry will not lose !

So long as sense may 'queathe
 Me privilege to keep
An image, whilst I breathe,
 This site's engraven deep.

Oh! Can our TRYST—hallowed
 By love's first pledge, embrace—
By Thee, God, be allowed
 Eternity t'efface!

TOO LATE.

His heart denied, love's token sweet refused
She mourneth now as heaven's gift abused,
And in her memory e'er will linger green
Her last wish, still her wish, as parting—seen
 His pleasure in her will,
 His wish to woo her still.

When her small hands by others tender pressed,
And her soft lips by other lips caressed,
His actions true, and words, with fond regret,
She'll aye recall, as well her wish that yet
 His pleasure was her will,
 His wish to woo her still.

“Oh! Dearie, how I wish I'd kissed you now!”—
Her last low plaint, her pray'r, she'll wish were vow
To love, kiss, fondle—long as breath could keep
Her heart alive, that now doth silent weep
 What might have been her will,
 His right to woo her still.

OF WHAT AVAIL!

I.

'Neath clear spring skies I stroll the turf's rich green,
And list' the merry warblers that careen
Above its velvet, and the ripe'ning hedge
That fringes, to the water's edge—

Of what avail !

II.

I linger o'er the streamlet's silver sheen,
Its tinted-pebble bed, and depths unseen;
Pursue its course along the hillock's base,
Where vines and boughs, depending, interlace—

Of what avail !

III.

I climb broad slopes, and rugged cliffs ascend;
Survey grand vistas which the heavens blend—
Enclosing valleys rich with herds and crops,
Encircling mountains crowned with frosted tops—

Of what avail !

IV.

I thread the mazes of the lonely wood;
Recline on banks of moss; in dreamy mood,
Evoke weird spirits from the dank ravine
That the wild forest-shadow falls between—

Of what avail !

V.

Of what avail? Ah! It availeth not
That God hath made his ev'ry work divine;
How e'er sublime the thought, or grand the spot—
Since all of rapture in my heart doth fail,
Save when I have the joy of echoing thine,
My love! My love!—
Of what avail!

TO FLORA

(OF THE DEMI-MONDE.)

Pretty blossom whilst thou bide,
All the stronger could'st endear
Hearts, if would'st thy petals hide
From false lights, nor disappear
Altogether from the world—
Only nestle in the shade,
Where thy leaves—by love unfurl'd,
Sweet hope moist'ning—ne'er would fade.

Little Flora, tint thy bloom,
Ere it perish, with love's hue,
For when wither'd, sear the doom
Meted out to flow'rs like you—
Nipt by frosts before the sun
Nature's glow life's buds can fill.—
Flora, list'! The seasons run;
Few the days are left thee still.

MY SPRING IS HERE: *b.*

If the snow be piled in drifts,
Still my violets sweetly bloom;
Tho' the whistling wind sweeps chill,
Yet my blue-bird gaily chants.

For the violet—that lifts
Its bright petals from the gloom
Of bleak March, my heart to thrill—
Clara's glance, englowing, haunts.

And the bird, whose warbling rifts
Through white flakes—that weave their loom
'Mid the blinding gusts which fill
Clouded sky—chirps Clara's taunts.

LOVE HATH NO BOURNE.

“Why sleep you, in the gloaming, here?”

I spake, and gently grasped
The stranger's hand, while clasped
Its mate the stone he slumbered near.

With dazed look, upraised, he sighed;—

Then marked he my grave tone—
My eyes, that plainly shone
Mute pity's glint—and low replied:

* * * *

I waken from a holy trance

You blindly mis-name sleep—
Not known may tearless weep
My heart the pall that shrouds her glance—

Her glance, that glows, through light or shade,

In deep-graved semblances
From sweet remembrances
By love bestowed, ne'er doom'd to fade—

Feeling my erstwise void—the past,

With its foretaste of peace,
Assuring care's release
Through love, shall be renewed at last;—

That altho' sundered we—by fate,
Love hath merged heart and will,—
Once loving, love we still,
And love's elysium, trustful, wait;—

Knowing her spirit bound with mine
By loyal love's soft ties,
Whose Jove-like strength defies
Creation's pow'r to undermine!

ALTHAZAR'S WOOING.

(A LOVE LETTER.)

My darling little girl: 'Twas kind in thee to praise
My meagre lines; but of my thoughts, poor,
weak the offspring
Seem in cold, set speech. Fancy's flight shall
vainly raise
The muses; not the nine combined have force to
sing
How deeply I adore, love, worship thee!

Jehovah's fire divine might human wit inspire
With language consonant my reveries to show,
My dreams with coloring appropriate attire—
My waking, sleeping visions, all are so aglow
With beatific images of thee!

No mortal gift can e'er portray the ecstasy,
Surprise, compassion, hope by which I was
confused
When thy soft eyes bequeathed to mine the legacy
Of their first glance—a glance that fain would
have refused
Response;—tho' naught have my eyes since
beheld save thee!

In that grave moment, when from thy proud brow
I pushed
The tresses back—tearing the mask from thy
false life,
Showing how tenderness was numbed, how hopes
were crushed,
Where both should bloom and flourish—when
in thee at strife
Justice and truth I saw, how my heart bled
for thee !

And when in my sad tale of thine the counterpart
Was found, it is our secret sweet how pity
nourished
Sympathy, till in every fibre of my heart
One sentiment had weight to thrill, one form was
cherished !—
Can'st ever doubt if then my soul was nearest
thee ?

It was not left to question, after that sweet hour
I caught a shadow from thy lattice backward
shrink,
If insecure to meet my glance had fall'n thy
power;—
Thence mine has been whatever pleasure man
may drink
Of this world's springs.—Words vainly speak
my love for thee !

Nor ever can coined phrases echo from one heart
Unto another, which affinity hath bound
Together with its web supreme—nor can pen
impart—
The glories love hath conquered, hopes that trust
hath found.—
Profane the hand would dare describe my love
for thee!

FATAL HUE.

I.

In my brief cycle, eyes of mellow brown
Are deep-haloed—by Fate's kind will, the charm,
Through memory, deigned my earth.—Looking far
down,
Beyond the vistas, whence my mother's arm
Again encircles me—no thought beside
Recalled, my soul is pierced—tho' graves be-
tween—
By glances beaming love, at flooding tide,
From orbs of richest brown—gleaming with ser-
aph's sheen.

II.

And so, alway, have eyes of brownéd hue
My spirit moved with quickest, tendrest thrills.—
A dulcet vision now enwafts to view
A shade celestial—that, with rev'rie fills
My heart—begemmed with stars of brown, that
caught
The tinder-leaves of love, in hope's wild years—
My cadences of youth's first passion taught;—
I ever see them—as we parted—bathed in tears.

III.

Anon there came a fair maid—later, wife,
The mother of my children—faithful, fond,
Tend'ring to me, as pledge of love, her life
By her best lights, retaining me in bond
Not by my penance, or yet by her care—
Reflex e'er found in umbered suns that seek
My will, but by four other eyes—two pair
Of magnet brown—that unto father's, pleading,
speak.

IV.

And at the last, I've won my soul's franchise—
Reposed 'neath deeps of brown that mirrored
first
Affinity's rare realms, the paradise
Where hearts are soothed—their chords yet kept
athirst
For love—love only—love that always lives—
Love that creates, consumes, yet never tires—
A well that craves for more, while most it gives—
Love, grand, supreme—unequal-hymned by
countless lyres!

THAT PORTRAIT, WHOSE?

That portrait, whose? you ask?—Faint image of a
dream

Of long ago,
My only dream that e'er brought peace, and made
life seem

A sweet echo
Of love—
Of Heaven—

The one dim reflex left to me of pleasures past—
The clouds to chase
From mem'ry's realms, or mirror—from beyond the
last

Bounds of my race—
Of love—
Of Heaven.

LOVE ALONE CAN SAVE THE HEART.

A SONG.

I.

I wander, oft, with merry guests, o'er landscape-
gardened grounds,
'Cross emerald lawns, through umbrage close,
adown sequestered ways—
By bower and fountain, lake and rill, and yet, in all
my rounds,
Find no delight from broad domain, no balm
from others' praise
Of that which charms external sense, while touch-
ing not the heart.

II.

Tis true that many here might dwell, and happily
endure
What to my sight is but the yield of taste, with
gold allied,
That many might their lives enjoy 'mid scenes that
me assure
How often—to the real fate—the ideal is denied;
For seeming by possessions blest, still void may be
the heart.

III.

In noble aspirations crossed, in pure affections
chilled,

Checked by mistakes too late to mend, by
wounds too late to heal,

Whose sentiment, by charms of nature, or of art,
is thrilled!—

So long as memory survives, or instinct lasts, we
feel

The only joys that give content are those of a lov-
ing heart.

IV.

Riches are dross, all pastime's dull, philosophy's a
snare

To him whose breast finds no response, whose
thought no echo brings,

Since all the garnish of our strife, in this bleak
world of care,

Is brief and passing as the wind; the only wealth
that clings

Eternally unto the soul is that of a loving heart.

V.

Then take, oh! take my worldly goods and wares,
my grand estates,

Fame, fortune, all man covets in his envy and his
pride,

And give me but a loyal heart, a mind, a soul that
mates

My own, in sweet affinity, in every sense my
bride,

Her creed: LOVE IS IMMORTAL—LOVE ALONE CAN SAVE
THE HEART!

FRANCESCA'S REVERIE.

Love him! why should I not love, idolize, adore
The man who first with interest did condescend
Inquire my wretched tale, a pitying ear did lend,
Bade hope I might myself unto myself restore?

Love him! worship were far more merited and true
A word by which express the sentiment—too
deep
For circumscription to the narrow bounds that
keep
My poor heart powerless to herald his just due.

Not my weak prayers for him presume implore
From God the recompense deserved to manly
deeds;
His charity of soul and faith obscure the needs
Of prayer, than which they of themselves assure
far more.

Then why thus smoulder, in my heart of hearts,
the fire
That burns to flash before the world my love's
incense!

Or why not rest my head, proud, on his bosom—
whence
Ne'er beats a pulse that would not for my sake ex-
pire!

Alas! was it recorded, for a purpose wise,
That destiny should pitilessly interpose,
To haunt my horoscope, a shadow 'till life's
close?
Then quickly perish all, save love! THAT never
dies.

For him my fealty deep, eternal as the skies!
As infinite my faith—resigning me to live
Here, in the one sweet hope his love, his trust
doth give:

OUR COMPENSATIONS GOD ANON MUST EQUALIZE.

ALTHAZAR'S MUSE.

(A REVERIE.)

My best was tombed
Upon thy bier,
When fell the tear
My fate that gloomed,
My Love.

Yet have I wreathed
A single gem,
Your diadem
It shall adorn,
My Love!

For you first breathed
Into my heart
The vivid dart
From which was born
My Love—

My life's true leaven—
All e'er was worth
My stay on earth,
My hope of heaven,
My Love!

Whatever food
 My thoughts may grow
 My God doth owe
Thy pow'r for good,
 My Love!

Hence, bloom or fade,
 My mind's estate
 I dedicate
To thy dear shade,
 My Love—

For tribute mine—
 Soul's glimpse, and heart's
 My muse imparts—
To build our Shrine,
 My Love!

LOVE'S GREETING.

A perfume, as from spirit land,
 Wafts nigh;—
A gentle pressure meets my hand;—
 A sigh
Breaks;—and a face dawns—rose-hued deep;—
 Whilst eye
So searching gleams, my pulses leap
 And fly.

A form seraphic circles mine
 With bliss
So pure, the current seems divine;—
 A kiss—
Diviner—links with her's my soul.—
 Amiss
The thought, for either, other goal
 Than this!

Behold the tokens nightly brings
 Sweet love
To me, with hope that brightly sings
 Above
My worldly cares—mid' dreams
 That move
So peacefully—with life heav'n seems
 Enwove.

A THRILL.

Why do yon flute's vibrations sweet
Thus melt my soul to tears?
Alas! Bright hours they bid me greet—
Adown the vale of years.

They waft to me so soft and low
Her fav'rite airs, I bide
Near wont familiar hearthstone's glow—
Fair Anna by my side.

They vivify my dream of love—
Tho' ne'er love's mem'ry lost—
Call back love's looks, ways, tones, to move
Me now, in life's hoar frost.

MY SANCTUM. c.

High-crested o'er a pretty square—
Rich-foliaged deep-green—as fair
 As nature's own;
Ought I not feel—so grand the perch—
My visions spread therefrom in search
 Of faerie throne ?

Aye, when the sun beams on the trees,
Their boughs sway'd gently by the breeze
 Of balmy June,
As 'neath their shade yon fountain plays—
In rhythm resembling minstrel lays—
 Its cadent tune;

While all within speaks taste and art—
My hive array'd, in every part,
 With chaste design;
Its sides with dainty pictures hung—
Some rare, suggestive works among,
 You may opine.

No doubt 'tis dear the reader deems
My attic-parlor, and the dreams
 With which endow'd—

Its desk and cabinet, choice books
And prints, its casement that o'erlooks
The humming crowd.

Not always dear—but desolate
My sanctum, myself isolate,
When she not here.
Dull, drear and sombre seem my walls,
Dim, pall'd my gaze, where'er it falls,
Till she appear.

ALAS, DEAR WIFE OF MY SOUL!

Never a Nay answer'd she,
So long as she lived, to me;
Never a scowl or a frown,
When most by sad cares weighed down;
For me quick thought and kind cheer—
A kiss, tho' all the world near;
Tender of speech as a dove—
She lived, helpmeet, for my love.
 Alas, dear wife of my soul,
 If there be heaven, my goal!

Always a smile or a tear—
As I would be cheered or moved;
Never a tremor of fear
To grieve the heart hers so loved;
Never a pain or an ache
Wailed she—ere sympathy knew;
Her aim and work, for my sake,
To live, to suffer, to do.
 Alas, dear wife of my soul,
 If there be heaven, my goal!

I feel that she's waiting me now,
If souls hereafter survive;

Waiting and watching I trow,
Her soul for mine—yept alive
(The wherefore, or why, or how
To God alone known) to strive,
With patience, my fate to bow
Till joy'd my summons arrive—
To join the wife of my soul
In our lives' ultimate goal.

LOVE'S BARD.

Spontaneously springs the song
Of love from poet's soul.
Soft glide the strings his lyre along
Responsive strains that dole
To human ears the glint divine
Of chords the heavens sway
From symphonies the muses nine
Alone may harp alway.

No clod, of plain, prosaic mold
E'er on the lyre essay'd
Love's measure strike, or moods unfold
By stanzas interlaid
With scintilating gems apt-rhymed—
But seraphs quick discerned
His metre counterfeit, ill-timed
His fire, his verse ill-turned.

The soul of bard doth throb and bound
With sympathy so keen,
No grim disguise can dull the sound
His couplets bright careen,
Or hide the sparks his thoughts that flame
With pow'r to move the heart
As nothing can beside—no name,
No skill, no drosser part.

WE MUST LIVE AGAIN.

Why have we hoped, my love, so long and vain,
Ourselves to understand,
Since both our souls demand—
As a condition—we must live again ?

Elaine ! Unanswered we shall ever plead
For mercy to enjoy
Love born without alloy,
Or confidence no shaft can rudely bleed.

Wrecked are our hearts—that should beat one,
and rent
Our lives—by force of fate,
Because we did not wait,
With patience, for the signs which mark content.

Regrets o'erhang our past, and shadows cross
Our paths, to make obscure
The truths we might endure
If they could compensate us for our loss.

Why dream, alas ! of compensation here ?
Apart we farther drift,
No hope our hearts to lift
Until the welcome shrift—

ANNIHILATION, or a BRIGHTER SPHERE.

OUR HOLIDAY.

Why seem, to-day, the skies so bright and clear,
The flow'rs so fragrant, and the meads so green,
The groves so full of peace, the atmosphere
So musical with bird-notes, and the sheen
Yon lake reflects so heav'nly?—Ah! A face
Gleams with the glance its heart bespoke, sweet
Grace,
When you wish'd me a happy holiday.

And as I walk the woods, stroll pastures fresh,
The wavelets skim, or thread the golden grain,
I almost feel you with me, in the flesh—
So treasure I your wish, so gently rain
Your eyes sincere the dew, as your lips trace
The truth with which they give the thought,
sweet Grace,
For my enjoyment of this holiday.

I hope this day, my little friend, may bring
To you delights to banish ev'ry care!
Be you as cheerful now, as I, since sing
All sounds one melody, and everywhere
I pause or turn, your eyes, your voice, sweet Grace,
In my poor heart o'er nature's charms keep pace.—
For you, as me, be this true holiday!

CONFECTION.

(A N A L B U M L E A F)

Thy charms, my lexicon's grand store
Of sweets, vain laboring
To pen!—Thou JUJUBE—nectar'd o'er
With angel's flavoring!—
Thou MALLOW white, from faery-shore,
Of heaven savoring!—
Choice MARRON GLACÉ—of the rare
Thy small hands favoring!
Truce, Madeline! for thou so fair,
My song I'd braver sing
If fate were kind!—Oh! why not dare
For thee to graver ring
The chimes my heart now guards with care?
BECAUSE TRUE PEACE I'D BRING!

IN MEMORIAM. *d*

Chaste flower,
No power
Could change thy fate—
Thy dower,
The hour
Should not be late
For parting.

Indeed,
Decreed
From birth—thy death
Should speed;
The seed
In thy first breath
Of parting.

Not less
We bless,
With sorrow deep—
The few
That knew
Thy worth, and weep
Thy parting.

Thy meed:
Kind deed,
And gentle word,
Truth, love—
Above
Divinely heard
Since parting.

Friends lave
Thy grave,
Sweet ALICE EARL,
With tears,
Tho' cheers
The thought they pearl—
Since parting—

A brow
That now
God's chaplet wears,
Nor fades,
Nor shades
With earth's sad cares
Of parting.

A LOVER'S HYMNAL.

An angel's visit I await,
Yet feel my angel knows
So well my thoughts, from dawn till late,
She'll look—in verse or prose—
For one short pray'r from me.

And I will make it love's sweet pray'r:
God fill my darling's heart
With peace; and teach—no matter where—
She'll find its tend'rest part
Abiding, true, in me.

III.

* * *

Next, brief conceits the mind invade
And capture to express
Trite theories, or theses staid,
Or clamors for redress
Of wrongs and errors by the plane
Of worldly squares and rules,
Not heeding how diseased the grain
Of sense in human fools.

* * *

A Poet's Introspect, (Page 18).

ALTHAZAR'S MISSION.

I.

Althazar fell, lang syne, upon a lurid haunt—
Of sinister repute. It was his venture first; the
last
In his life's span, save the like end to serve, God
grant!

II.

For he met there a stray'd child—'dowed with
timid grace;
Of mien, rarely so pensive—in lovelier mold, none
cast.—
Strangely, wrongly, utterly seemed she out of
place!

III.

He looked into her weary, melancholy eyes,
To penetrate the mystery environing her past;
And from their depths surged one of nature's lies!

IV.

My token you, wise-reading, understand, or should,
To phrase the obstacles—so vast—cold destiny
hath flung
Before the will and effort to do ever good—

The sad impossibility events, stern, raise—
Except, mayhap, for those by fortune favor'd to
die young—
Of following paths prescribed, in so-termed right-
eous ways.

V.

How false did seem all cant, how chill philosophy,
Viewing the fate of this poor waif Althazar found
among
The shadows, where she linger'd—lacking strength
to fly!

“By what mischance of Justice came you here!”
he had
Nigh falter'd; but the words, reproachful, broke
upon his tongue—
It seem'd so harsh in him to rank her with the bad.

VI.

The while he mutely gazed, so crossed her lot ap-
peared,

So counter-vailed her thoughts—as if, amid de-
spair, they clung

Yet to a hope, his soul with pity was new-reared.

Revived sprang dearest images of his own youth

To life again, as on Althazar's lips the question
hung

That feared to shake his tott'ring citadel of TRUTH.

VII.

A mask her brow might wear; he, ne'ertheless,
would save;

He dared not judge; to plead, admonish, move,
he dream'd not how;

He simply realized a wish for strength tradition
gave

Jove's mythic preachers, of the fabled days of
yore—

A wish for charity of patience, wisdom, power,
now

To lift a wreck'd craft o'er the quicksands—nothing
more.

VIII.

A radiant face—that, years ago, was wont to
bend

Tow'rd his, ere sombre death had robbed his
world of its one saint,
His mother's—from the skies did tearfully descend,

As if in answer to a pray'r. And group'd her's
round

His sisters' smiles, encouraging. Hallow'd mem-
ories—faint
Before—arose so vivid, confidence was found,

And a vague trust—urging his soul, with sudden
force,

To purposes divine—yielding him introspect to
paint
Of fate's capricious ends the causes in life's course.

IX.

Then to Althazar woke the voice just hopes inspire;
And soe'er brief the interlude between first
thought and speech,
In calmly whispered words, he breathed a sacred
fire—

Not of stage or forum, of altar or of field,
But of a soul yearning, with noble sympathy, to
reach
Those silent chords, in ev'ry creature kin, that
yield,

When touched, unto the right—making seem false
and gross,
Delusive, desolating, God-forsaking, mad, im-
pure,
All ways, things, circumstances, born of passion's
dross—

Raising from the mist of dulled faith and wrong
pride,
Above the horizon, into heaven's undimmed
azure,
The knowledge that on safe paths chance *may*
bring a guide.

X.

Althazar won, by sympathy's warm eloquence,
That hour, a soul from chains and fetters it
would hence abjure,
Miscast—not by its will, but by its confidence

In seeming good, that here gives Hell its influence
To lead unwary steps on roads and by-ways rendered sure
By one guide only—bought with age—*EXPERIENCE*.

XI.

To dim remembrance since, in vain the years have
rolled;
The lustre of that hour—as a *MISSION*—will endure,
Pleading Althazar's grace, when his life's knell is
tollèd.

BROOK NO KING.

Space and time's omniscient Seer
Man denies the gifts mature
To the worth, my sons, doth meed
Right divine to king o'er you.

Wind and mind, both balm and blear,
Sweep beneath the sky's azure—
Changing if in pow'r and speed—
Yielding no man more than you.

Aye! All breathe one atmosphere;
All, by mold, of like nature.—
Cancerous the womb would breed
Caste or class to king o'er you!

What tho' some call life career?
Others deem we fate endure.—
Neither sanctions king or creed
Sporting fate, my sons, or you.

Lies tradition holding dear
Tyrant, or his record pure!
Trusts, e'er spurn'd by him, should lead
You to brook no king of you.

Crowns, nor crests, nor sceptres here
All the symbols slaves insure.—
Read this truth—its warning heed:
Gold would starve—to king o'er you!

Cassocks dynasties may rear,
Sects evoking to assure
Bondage—spawn'd of fears and greed.—
Bigotry would king o'er you!

Question you what course to steer—
Apt your lot to best secure—
Shunning king-craft's shoal and weed?
List', my sons, I'll answer you:

* * *

Ask no favor! Feel no fear!
Of yourselves seek to be sure—
Never vaunting, but by deed
Proving no man king of you!

Counsel with your soul! The sneer
Of pride condemn! Be cynosure
Of your own right aim—the need
No king can supply to you!

Crown content! Mold heart! Spread cheer!
If you would the crosses cure
Of experience, and feed
By the hands no king gave you.

Anchor faith on no one's bier
Save your own! Let no charm lure
Your leal to the toils that knead
Servitude and king for you!

Cringe not! Bend not! You are peer
Of the czar, whom dreads now 'mure
'Neath the shadows, to which speed
Princes all who'd king o'er you!

When to thrones the 'larum drear
Breaks, anon, so all may hear:
GOD IS FREEDOM!—Far and near
Hue the tocsin! Loud and clear
Ring the chimes, with blood imbure!
Strip, and burn the garniture
Masking worldly crowns! THE SEED
KILL OF SIRE WHO'D KING O'ER YOU!

MY REVERENCE.

Let other mortals dwell in awe of the unknown;
Or fawning, cringe—with timid nerve—to tinsel'd
 throne,
To dynasty, to chief, to him with whom they hire;
Or homage pay to leader, master, patron, sire;—
So they yield me the choice, which my soul doth
 incline—
With rev'rence deep—tow'rd forms wherein I can
 divine
A spirit gentler, purer, nobler, grander far
Than all the venerated I have mentioned are.

If mov'd by cant, or by cold prudence urged, the
 power
Behind whose mystic sway the superstitious cower
I might reserve; but I cannot my pen with awe
Infuse for terrors I ne'er dreamed, or dangers saw.
As for the panoplied, of human sort—tho' clad
In purple—sceptred, or by custom's quest, as sad—

With plume encrest', in surplice robed, or mitre
 cased,
If I once felt an awe for either, 'tis effaced.

Infer not ev'ry form and phase I under-rate—
I neither sentiment nor feeling venerate;
The godly I have oft'nest found in simple guise,
In untrained thought ideas might put to blush the
 wise.—

In little children—open-eyed, all innocence,
Heeding impressions first, of no experience,
Save that derived from nature's view, sound and
 contact—

I see far more to awe than man's maturest act.

My eyes shall never look on aught more beautiful—
Endowing me with sense of what is dutiful
So perfectly, so reverently that I grieve
To think of the small strifes which, bitter, inter-
 weave

Our work-day destinies, from cradle to the tomb—
Than tender nurseling, gentle-lisping child, in
 whom

Perception of deceit, remotest glimpse of wrong
Have not yet germed to taint the good—new-born
and strong.

For such how deep my pity, how great my concern !
So much they have to unlearn, not the less to learn,
Of ways and things so vastly unlike what they
seem—

Perverting instincts, hopes—impelling them to
deem

The crookéd path unto contentment they can climb
Only by flatt'ry, falsehood, treachery and crime,—
That ALL MY REVERENCE AND AWE I FEEL I OWE
To THE CONDITION DOTH PURE TRUTH, SWEET MERCY
SHOW.

NOBLESSE OBLIGE.

Equipp'd is he in redingote,
In sportsman's cap and gear—
As prancing on his steed, with proat
He spurs her flanks, while near
Him, mid' the hounds, there gayly ride—
All deck'd in bright attire—
His retinue, on ev'ry side,
Whose whips and horns aspire:
Noblesse oblige.

He moves, at his attorney's wand,
And dips his pen to sign
Of his broad acres, mansion grand,
A mortgage to the Jew
Who holds, in virtue, all the fee
An auction sale would show;
But then "Milord" his friends with glee
Must feast—his rank sustain.
Noblesse oblige.

Carouse he must, and yacht, and game,
And give his heir her dot;
His sire and grandsire did the same—
So will his scions do,

If anything to pledge remains
 Of lands or jewels rare,
 To keep the style blue blood maintains
 When 'twould attest its brand.

Noblesse oblige.

The ball, the race, the hunt they lead,
 The round of folly run;
 Of fox bereft, chase aniseed—
 Their kennel and their stud
 To keep in practice for their guests,
 'Till health and energy,
 And fortune, mock'd, to time's behests
 Succumb—t' attest their brand.

Noblesse oblige.

*

*

*

She droops beneath the rafters low
 And plies her slaving trade—
 With stitch and seam, while idly flow
 The streams of wealth that ride,
 Her casement viewing, to the park—
 To catch the ev'ning breeze;—
 Yet toils she onward 'till the dark
 Enshrouds her—heeding not .

Noblesse oblige.

He wields a chisel and a plane,
Or deftly points a wall,
Or shoulders hod, nor doth disdain
The plainest raiment wear;—
When freed from work, his hearth beside,
A sire—at frugal board—
He rules six waifs his counsels guide—
No thought of mark or brand.—
Noblesse oblige.

With sturdy arm, he steers the plow
And plants the fruitful grain;
He grasps the helm, and moves the prow
That braves the rocking main;
He weaves the texture of your coat,
Nor scorneth his hard hand
To do whate'er men list or note
Attesting labor's brand.—
Noblesse oblige.

He delves and mines, and from the mill
Of nature plucks and grinds
The rare inventions human skill
In this quick age hath wrought
To make the lights of other days
Seem lustreless and dim,

The page of history blank, the lays
 Of minstrel crack'd, when sung
Noblesse oblige.

* * *

Ah ! Which the real *Noblesse oblige*
 That men should recognize—
 To which the heart should pay its liege—
 That we should highest prize ?
 Are they the noblest idly eat
 The grist from labor's strand,
 Their lives mis-spent, themselves to cheat
 With clam'ring: "Our's the brand—
Noblesse oblige !"

That is the true *Noblesse oblige*,
 Which arbitrary caste
 (By ignorance unfought,) held siege
 In other epochs—vast
 With opportunities for greed,
 For tyranny and vice—
 To-day ranks far o'er knightly screed,
 Above a kingdom's price !
 Behold, in honest hearts, and liege
 To fellow-men, NOBLESSE OBLIGE.

SOUL SINISTER.

How oft, for causes yet untold,
Are nature's surface beauties marred,
The warmth from graceful figures barred
By artifices cruel, cold!

How oft' do wit and courage bold
Seem joined to pulses cannot beat
In sympathy, but masked retreat
Behind recesses glooms enfold!

How oft' do eyes, that pathos melt
And seem with clemency alight,
While urging good, inciting right,
Yet promptings hide that Hecate felt!

Oh! Fatal curse! Soul sinister—
Obscured and veiled by gifts that lead
Sweet confidence to wastes where bleed
Hearts, to which none may minister!

Shine, Truth Supreme! Through cloud and maze
Let break thy rays, so they reveal
How knaves thy livery may steal—
Thy semblance mask, for tortuous ways!

On hypocrites imprint the brand—
The sign, deep-sinister—to warn
Against their pitfalls, hold to scorn
Their virtues, which are writ' in sand!

TRUST NOT APPEARANCES.



Judge men, my son, not by appearances, but acts—
Not by that which they say, but what thy do;
For they who play their real parts, speak their
thoughts, are few.—
Indeed, who of his failing would betray the facts!

Tis not the priest, who loud descants—in pious
wrath—
Of thy declining grace, or with moist unction
pleads,
True sympathy of heart most feeleth for thy
needs,
Or knoweth best how soothe thy spirit, guide thy
path.

'Tis not the swaggart trumpeter of actions brave
That spurs the serried host to victory or death,
Or by his presence awes the mob and bates its
breath,
Or leads the van—the weak to rescue, faint to
save.

'Tis not the wheedling pettifogger—armed with
calf
And legal cap, due-parceled, bound with crim-
son tape—
In law most learned, tho' he contrive the fel-
lon's 'scape,
Snarl judges grave, and juries move to weep or
laugh.

Nor doth the man of pomp, or plausible address,
In fabric clad of costly loom—of conscious
wealth,
Dwelling in frescoed palaces, and vaunting
health
And honesty of purpose, yield thee truth's im-
press.

Nor doth the ferreting physician's sharp probos-
cis—
Assuming nature's shad'wy depths to penetrate,
To recognize in man the sick from normal state—
From symptoms always guess the proper diagnosis.

Nor can the politician, when all other ways
To fraud and theft (within the statute) are de-
barred,
For patriot's, or sage's, his own guise discard,
And mount to heights where worth, abiding, need-
eth praise.

And before all, my son, beware those syren sweets
Or smiles, behind which ever lurk such cruel
freaks
That robbed of his best, fondest hope, the man
who seeks
In them the charm idealty raises, contact cheats.

To understand the man, observe how throbs his
heart;
Learn whither tend his thoughts, and mark his
ev'ry deed,
Distinguishing, in him, the flower from the
weed—
The soul of him from that in him which plays a
part.

IV.

* * *

Or chirping fancies frisk and leap
From idle whims, and seize
The effervescing thoughts that sweep
The skies, o'er gale or breeze
Or whirl with eddies, buff with tide,
Or pierce the vapid mists,
Or in the coach of humor ride,
Or mime in comic lists.

* * *

A Poet's Introspect, (Page 18).

A SHADE.

Alone, a poet gazed upon the sea—
Musing of man, and life, and destiny,
And of the wiles by which they mutiny
Our thoughts and aims, desires and energy.

The while he mused, twain stars, envisioned, passed
So thoughtfully before him, that he read—
Himself unseen—their inner depths, trance-fed
By sea, and sky, and main, in reverie cast.

And as the vision glided o'er the strand,
He knew it was of flesh—a low, pent moan
Its heart escaping, heedless of his own
So near—aspiring sympathy's warm hand.

Onward, afar, away—the image moved,
Leaving behind a shadow he shall wait
The substance of in vain—his soul elate,
At times, with dreaming: “ Might we not have
loved ! ”

OCCULT.

What is't that animates the child
Shrink from the gloom of night?—
With quickened pace, side-glancing wild,
Throb to regain the light?—
At every twig that snaps, a chill
Feel shooting through each vein?—
At sound or creak, that breaks the still,
List', halt, and list' again?

What is't that prompts his whistle shrill,
When threading in the dark?—
The empty halls his terrors fill
With sprites that bid him hark
For footsteps on the barren stairs,
And tappings at the sash?—
Why doth the wind's moan crisp his hairs?—
Why faints he at a crash?

What is't that goads him reach his hand
Far out, as if to guide
His way, yet shrink from—as a band
Of fire—the wall beside,

'Till strained with groping for a gleam
Of light, mid' direst gloom,
There bursts—so long pent up—his scream:
“Pa! Some one's in the room!”

What is't!—It is the natural dread
Of marvels felt—not known,
Of mysteries, nor 'live, nor dead
Have ever solved or shown—
A consciousness there rules some Power,
For weal or woe, beyond
The ken of man, or that brief hour
We float o'er Life's Profound.

MIS-ALLIED.

Why question'd she if he a married man,
When his broad rift of bald, mid' whiten'd hairs,
And wrinkles—tokening domestic cares—
Mark'd but too plainly how his youthful impulse
ran?

He should have been (of that oft-cited ten) the one
To never make mistakes, to meet the fate
Rare born of early wooing.—Ah! too late
He met her whom he should have waited for and
won.

Aye! Tho' he might have wooed and wed a score
of times,
Tho' vows and altars from his side may bar
Her sanctioned reign, she is the worshipp'd star
His heart the sweetest incense wafts e'er moved to
rhymes.

A SIGH.

“Alas! You did not kiss me? ’Tis too late, love,
now!”

She murmur’d in the glare,
And crowd—close-clustered there,
Knowing that they must part
For life.

Why could they not their love by soft caresses
show?

Because the world’s wise laws,
And social rules—with claws
Of iron—mark the chart
Of life.

’Tis best, ere with the grief of fancied wrong
aglow,

She lit his soul, deep yearned
For hers, with spark that burned
So pure it could but start
In life.

FAIR AND FALSE.

Her dark eyes penetrate my soul,
And all my senses ravish
By their light;
Yet I am warned she is a ghoul—
With charms tho' decked so lavish—
Bearing blight.

Her smile my heart doth magnetize—
Melting my weak intention
To her will;
Yet calm reflections stigmatize
Her face a sweet invention
Framed to kill.

Her tones entrance—enraptured bind
Me to her orders, fettered
Like a slave;
Tho' well I know that you will find
Her tale—with shame so lettered—
Hell might crave.

Her spell on earth may never break,
But in its path destruction
Scatter aye;
Still hearts betrayed, for her sad sake,
Pray that some better part may wake
In her—for faith's instruction—
Bye and bye.

FIRST LOVE'S ADIEU. *f*

It is throbbing in my veins, love,
Thy hand-clasp at the gate,
As blushing we heard, above,
The old clock strike—so late.

It is thrilling through my soul, love,
That last fond kiss of thine,
Which rose from lips then wont to move
Responsively to mine.

It is burning in my heart, love,
That last fond glance you threw,
As yearningly you waved your glove—
First passion's sweet adieu.

IT CANNOT BE.

A RESPONSE.

You cross?—Nay! but anxious a trifle—
Perhaps sad, at moments, to think
Your friend, from whose heart you would rifle
The pulses, is nearing the brink
Of life's dread abysses, where stifle
The hopes that here move as to drink
Of love from pure streams
Beginning in dreams,
To oft' end in utterless woe.

Ah! 'Tis I might seem cheerless and cross,
And tired, for impatience hath led
Me to seek, with results to hope's loss,
The pleasures here wanting, since dead
Youth and sympathy's faith—the dry moss
Of time hiding scars where love bled,
'Till faded the dreams
Once gilding life's streams—
For joys now encouraged too late.

QUESTIONING.

I.

With half-reciprocation, how could she have asked
Him to inscribe to her—by name—a verse, a line,
From every echo of whose musings gleamed a
mine
Of love so rich that in its rays she might have
basked?

II.

Will the grand truth yet dawn she has not under-
stood
The inspiration lent to poesy by love—
Whence, flaming, spring his symbols of the pow-
ers which move
To faith in her—as the epitome of good?

III.

May she, when this vale's pilgrimage shall seem
complete,
One day recall what he was judged to idly sing,
With eyes so changed that they shall feel awak-
ening
In wierd spheres—doubting if deserved their joys
to greet?

IV.

Or can she brood, long ere the ending, there may
be

A gulf impassible—spreading their hearts be-
tween,

Across which both may be so differently seen
Their now sweet whim shall coldly glare—a phan-
tasy ?

I FAIN WOULD SOFT PREACH HER.

AN ALBUM LEAF.

A rhyme to arch Emma?—
Ah! Dastard the pencil
 Would dare to aspire!
Sweet, petite and charming—
(The thoughts are alarming
 My muse would inspire.)

(The dear little teacher!
I fain would soft preach her
 How fondly I live
In hope I may reach her—
A moment beseech her
 Me lessons to give.)

Yet now that the pleasure
Is open to measure
 Her virtues in verse,
I find me unequal
To utter the sequel
 My longings rehearse.

Why another word say?—
Since my heart would betray
 The feelings imbibed
From manner, tone, face,
And a form of such grace
 As ne'er pen described.

NOVEMBER TO MAY.

AN ALBUM LEAF.

Oh! "May," why did you sue cold, bleak
"November"

To blight a leaf whereby you might remember
How poor the thought whose springs must soon
dismember?

Aye! May, my little friend, fresh, lovely, cheerful,
Mementoes ask from visions bright—not tearful,
And younger wits let make your album "Dear"-full.

For if the boys are now of the same gender
They were when my old heart was naive and tender
They'll sing you "Sweet," nor heed; "Will it
offend her?"

So take your Book; nor doubt, in months ap-
proaching,
A dearth of gallants on its leaves encroaching
With gentler themes than I dare think of
broaching.

BY THE SEA.

TO ———, A COQUETTE.

I gave my promise—here my promise keep—
To write; so now, as looking on the deep,
Encrested sea, beside which all things seem
But small, and you the smallest—aye, a dream
Of dwarfing folly, (waken'd from, 'tis true,)
I send the sketch (so idly asked) to you.

* * *

God's mirror of the stars—old ocean blue—
Heaves its grand symphonies, my senses through
A thrill of awe inspires, yet peace and rest
Brings to my troubled heart, invoking quest
Of nobler hopes than life's small compass yields,
And holier than spring earth's barren fields.

Thence landward drift my thoughts—upon the
strand,
No grain of which (tho' few will understand),
Less useful in the universal plan
Than bird, or beast, or fish, or fowl, or man,
And possibly with sense (if hid) as keen
As man's, and heart as kind—perhaps as mean.

And thence my eyes revert to tender eyes
That follow mine, as falling from the skies,
They pause before the salt waves' broad expanse,
Sweep o'er the surf, and meet a glowing glance
From seas that mirror love, as deep, as true
As ocean gleaming the infinite hue.

My hand seeks her's responding; gently bends
Her form, to which divinity soft lends
An image fashioned slenderly, with grace
Vouchsafed so rarely here, methinks her place
Would be more justly 'mid the naiads, crowned
With purer laurel than in our world found.

And yet my soul to her outpours its love,
The while she bends, each word to catch above
The breakers' roar and sighing undertow,
And echo back, with cadences so low
They seem an angel's whisper: "Love, 'tis bliss
With thee!"—her whisper sealing with a kiss.

Oh! kiss—sweet, pure, entrancing! Kiss divine!—
Eclipsing all the suns the skies that shine,
Dwarfing the ocean's majesty with love.
No other power above, below can move

To brave the elements—for of the soul
Is love, and God's Infinity its goal!

* * *

I trust my lines all that you hoped may seem,
Altho' a picture like to read a dream
To one whose heart has never felt, as yet,
A deeper throb than moves the vain coquette,
Who at the voice of loverscornful laughs,
And deems more tuneful far the lowing calf's.

SHE'LL UNDERSTAND.

I backward look'd, and caught her glance—
Her glance such volumes speaks,
And wonder if it was mis-chance
That beckoned me away;
Or was't my court'sy doth enhance
Her charm, that never seeks,
Or *sues*, or courts, but—as in trance—
Its vot'ry holds at bay?

Tho' onward I, yet backward e'er
My thoughts revert, and dwell
On that weird glance—from eyes that stir
The soul with passion's wand,
And wish that I had dared retrace
My steps, and bravely tell
How vain the struggle to efface
My ———. AH! SHE'LL UNDERSTAND!

V.

* * *

Or bubbling quirks the surface rise,
To ripple for a trice,
And bring a smile to saddened eyes—
A moment loose the vice
That shuts from sympathy its kin
Or fellowship with mirth—
Evoking transports that begin
To mold athwart their birth.

* * *

A Poet's Introspect, (Page 19).

MY HOSTAGES.

Four children, ranging in their years
From fourteen down to nine,
Group round the board our ev'ning cheers—
My faithful wife's and mine;
And as the hours whirl fleetly by—
At least for her and me—
A thousand questions oddly ply,
Amid their books and glee.

One boy demands: "Why, father, you
Content to live so plain?—
Of wiser men there are but few,
I trow.—Not brilliant Blaine,
Or bold Ben Butler, spite his wink,
An abler President
Could make than you—e'en, sooth, you think
Their efforts vainly spent."

"Aye, father," interludes my next:

"Why not a soldier you?"

And following his brothers text:

"If what they say be true—

That is, the papers—Grant's a muff;

You're brave as he, and smart;

And if you only cared enough,

Might play as great a part."

"Nay! Pa were, better, Vanderbilt,"

Breaks, earnestly, my third,

(A girl, of course.) "Then he had built

A larger house, and stirr'd

The social world—with diamonds,

And richest robes, so decked

Us all, that none could vie—his funds

Have strown, and never recked."

My youngest had not ventured yet

Her sage admonishment;

Nor was it deemed she might offset—

To their astonishment—

By her naïve speech, of simplest word,

Her elders' wisdom rare,

When, "PAPA!" Her small voice was heard:

"I LOVE YOU AS YOU ARE!"

“ My children, she most hap’ly reads,”
Spake I, “as nature prints—
Who faith, and love for kindred pleads,
And on their lineaments
Can with a deeper pleasure dwell
Than in the false acclaim
From fickle hearts, that idly swell
The requiems of Fame.”

“ Behold your fond old mother, here,
And on each other look !
Then vision, if you can, the year
Before her hand I took
Into my keeping, with the pledge—
So long as life should last—
’Twould be my dearest privilege
My fate with her’s to cast ! ”

“ Her fate, my boys and girls, in you
Was merged, and with it mine—
Since HOSTAGES, your mother, true,
Gave me—THEIR FEATURES THINE—
For fortune, fame, society—
The gods of folly’s chase.—
Aye ! You’re my soul’s satiety—
My care, my hope, my grace !

“Fame’s fleetly lost, when fairly won—
And fairly won by few;—
Great wealth, by honest dealing, none
Have gained, that I e’er knew;—
And it is custom’s phrase to call
“Society” *its masks*—
Its joys, those cloy—its scenes, those pall—
Its aims, those honor tasks.

“But you, my children! You, my wife!
Leave me no wish for fame—
No thought of wealth beyond the life
Of HOME (of which the name
Were, fitter, ‘wealth’ than that which ends
Possession with the breath,)—
NO THOUGHT OR WISH FOR AUGHT AMENDS
YOUR LOVE—SURVIVING DEATH!”

BONBONNIÈRE.

TO "NON PAREIL."

Dream'st thou, little candy-girl,
The melting glances from thine eye—
Sweeter than all the sweets I buy—
Spin my emotions to a whirl
Thou might'st suppress
With one caress?

Thy winsome hands my bon-bons bind,
Pray let me, sweet, in mine enfold
Just long enough to prove their hold
On my poor heart, which spurs my mind
To bold confess
Thy power to bless!

No?—Then, anon, should'st seek a friend
From out the crowds that daily throng
Thy mart—unmoved to love's wild song,
Wilt kindly deign a carrier send
With thy address?—
(My answer guess.)

Fear not the "mallow's" thy dear fate,
The "jube's," or the "caramel's,"
Shouldst yield thy charms to love that wells
From founts which yearn to estimate
Aught may oppress
Thee, and redress.

Should I devour thee—with mine eyes,
And with my lips—thy rose-bloom rain,
And, love protesting, kiss again
Thy hands, thy brow, thine all, sweet prize!
Could'st thou repress
My tenderness?

Ah! unto pleasures I would lead
Thee, love, with me so *en rapport*,
Our hearts should vie which most could court,
Which best express, which gentlest plead
The truths that bless
This vale's duress.

Altho' 'tis not in letters writ
How souls—by passion moved—may beat;
Nor can the lute's soft chord repeat
The melodies with love are lit.—
May they possess
Thee, Conjuress!

A FEW CARRIER-MOULTINGS.

AGE MATTERS NOT TO ME.

If I were only twenty-five,
My little Nell could *love* me;
But (as near fifty I arrive,)
She simply says she *likes* me!
(Or is the word a blur?)

Yet I love her, as I'm alive,
And by the Powers above me!
If I were sixty, vain to strive
The feeling hide that strikes me
Whene'er I think of her!

DOLLY WOULD NOT WAIT.

Ah! Hapless hour—decreed
The saddest of my fate,
Since Dolly would not heed
My spirit's bidding: WAIT!

For in my heart there burned
The fire of hope, divine—
Inspired by love;—I yearned
My SUN, to-day, might shine!

NO TIDING.

Is she ailing? I am; for no tiding
 (Tho' due for two long days) of her
From whose eye in vain I'd be hiding
 The feeling with which hope doth stir
 The innermost depth of my heart.

And I watch! And I wait! with dull longing
 (The carrier's step may be heard,)
To receive from the dear hand belonging
 To me (in my dreams) but one word—
 To soothe my tumultuous heart.

A TANG-LEAF.

The bright sea-beach of Long Branch;
 The breakers' peaceful woo;
The grateful breeze; the guards' launch;
 The yachtsmen, and their crew;
The man from town, from wild ranche;
 The children's playful coo;
The changes—at each turn—Blanche,
 Ne'er rob my thoughts from you!

DEPENDING UPON CIRCUMSTANCES.

A MARCH BALLAD.

I know a little maiden
 Who grieved that she was born,
 When all things seemed upbraiden
 By heaven—held in scorn
 By earth and sky, so laden
 With sleet from clouds forlorn,
 I blame her not, since Eden
 Her graces might adorn.

This maiden sighed : “ Why was I
 Born in the month so drear?—
 I hope ’tis not because I
 Some penalty must fear
 From sins or crimes ancestral
 My generation shade
 With omens borne on mistral,
 ’Neath glooms nor break, nor fade.

“ I pray it may not augur
 Ill-destiny for me—
 A life of sorrow, mauger
 The charm and peace I see,

On every side, to others
Vouchsafed in some degree;—
Alas! This March air smothers
Joy and expectancy!”

When thus the maid had spoken,
I took her hand in mine—
A moment seized (ere broken
Her current) to entwine
Her waist, and gently press her
My heart on—whisp’ring arch:
“She—willing I’d caress her—
Must have been born in March.”

She coyly pshawed and pouted;
But I my theme pursued:
“The month must not be scouted
When thou first chirped and cooed.
And know thee more:—If routed,
Poor March, not I had wooed
This small white hand, or doubted
If e’er thou wouldst I should.”

“In March!—*Thou* born in March, sir?”
My friend, protestful, asked;—
{The winds you’ve seen the larch stir;
With equal grace, when tasked

My love to list', and answer—
 In altered tones, she plead :)
 " March storms, near thee, enchant, sir;—
 I knew not what I said ! "

" Aye, sweet ! " I added, ' ' Cases
 Are changed by circumstance '—
 Since hinge on fickle bases
 All incidents of chance.
 So things, if missed their places,
 Will seem perplexed, perverse ;
 And ever lost are traces
 Of hearts—no love to nurse.

" The soul—and not the season—
 Hath faculty of tears ;
 The pulse—without a reason
 Beats joy, defies the years.—
 June, without thee, were dreary,
 Whilst March, near thee, is heaven.
 My life, thou guiding, cheery
 Wakes ;—vanished thou, 'twere riven."

A VALENTINE.

Of love accept an avalanche—
Not borne on glaciers chill—
But warming with caresses, Blanche,
Thy heart and soul to thrill—
Sweet currents burning to bestow
On lips of cherry hue,
On eyes that melt, and flash, and glow,
On dainty hands that do—
With grace—what love did beg requite—
The *single* favor mine,
Because, perhaps, the *first*—to write
A name—dear, dearest, THINE—
Made now MY VALENTINE.

VI.

* * *

Or wild caprices, with their fumes
And vapors, wierdly glow
Above the hum of labor's looms,
Yet far the stars below—
In frolic verse, or rollic rhymes,
Wild warbles fife, or freaks
Fantastically ring on chimes,
'Mid laughter's gleeful shrieks.

* * *

A Poet's Introspect, (Page 19).

THE PORTENT.

So cheeringly she met him at the gate—
As if his greeting she could hardly wait,
And held, as her fond wont, in former time,
To his her lips—sweet-perfumed, as with thyme,
He thought regrets had come to his defense,
Her heart resolved—with her recovered sense—
To make his life less wretched than before—
To show, earth held for him some peace in store.

A dinner, such as known he doted on,
Lay spread so daintily, so noted on
Its dishes care to please his appetite,
He felt as if had entered a new light
Upon his wedded fate, 'shamed to have learned,
So late, how his glum shade and speech were
turned
Forgivingly in the remembrance kind
Of her, to whose 'rapt int'rest he so blind.

And such an evening! Taper fingers dwelt
So softly on the organ's keys, he felt
Borne down the past, beyond their honeymoon,
Reminded of its ending—all too soon—
For reason, he, impulsive, could not mold
To her's his abrupt ways, could not unfold,
Weeks, months ago, the blossom—see how sweet!
From her dear heart exhaling love complete.

And when the morning dawned, his angel rose
Long ere he could his torpid lids uncloze.
Descended, from the breakfast-room her voice
Invited him to fruit—rare, ripe and choice,
Yet whetted more his palate by her sigh
At sorrow he so soon must bid good-bye.
Mournful, she kissed adieu, in his her hand,
When, struck her thought, as by a magic wand,
She spake: "To-morrow, sweet, is opening-day.
You'll not expect me, love, at home to stay?—
AND MAY I HAVE ANOTHER HUNDRED? SAY!"

TWO ANTIQUARIAN MODELS.

APROPOS, HOWEVER, OF ALL AGES AND GENERATIONS.

THE FIRST.

HIS ST. VALENTINE'S ODE—TO HIS GRANDSON.

She purred so naively, my weak heart
A tender palpitation felt;
But when I stroked her, in good part,
She scratched, and raised a cruel welt—
The Cat!

So cunningly and soft she stole,
My earnest moods and aims despite,
Into my humors, that my soul
Revolted at her vicious bite—
The Serpent!

For every whim she wheedled me;
Yet when meek I would humbly ask
A grain of human sympathy,
She'd kick, or balk it—as a task,—
The Mule!

Now, if you would all these combine
Of Eve's known graces, choose, you fool,
A maid—to merge your fate condign,
And thenceforth brook the fickle rule
Of cat, of serpent and of mule.

THE SECOND.

HER ST. VALENTINE'S ODE—TO HER GRAND-DAUGHTER.

Lone and silent he reposes,
 With such calm insouciance,
 That his bed seems one of roses
 'Till he grunts—and breaks the trance—
The Hog!

Sinisterly he approaches,
 And the careless list'ner fills
 With the complaints a suitor broaches
 When he coos—'till dart his quills—
The Porcupine!

By his own voice thrill'd with rapture,
 Wildly cackles he: "I'll give
 Every dollar I can capture
 For my service if you'll live!—"
The Goose!

Ne'er more seek, through long instalments,
 Romance here condensed in bulk;
 If you'd feel this life's enthrallments
 With acuteness, draw some hulk
 From the lottery of Hymen,
 On love's altar slip the noose,
 And be hence reminded by men
 Of hog, porcupine and goose!

JENNIE BRADSHAW. *g*

I.

“Oh! who was that girl, so dashing and blithe,
Her features so charming and form so lithe,
Of the hazel eye and roseate cheek,
With an air of pride and a dash of pique,
And the 'witching smile of a gay coquette?—
Oh! answer; who is this maid that I met—
That with you in the private-box I saw,
A night or two since at the opera?”
I replied: “Tom, lovely Miss Jennie Bradshaw.”

II.

“Who was that damsel, so gentle and sad,
So queenly in air, and tastefully clad,
With the melting brown orb, of hueless cheek,
So noble in carriage, and yet so meek,
With a seraph's glance, and an angel's smile—
Full of expression and free from guile?—
Oh! who was this maiden I saw with you,
Arm-in-arm, promenading the avenue?”
“Ah! Ned, she is peerless Miss Jennie Bradshaw.”

III.

“Who was that maid at the Park, by-the-bye.
Of the sweet modest face and swimming blue eye,

With daintiest form and a dimpled cheek,
And a gypsy hat, and the charming freak
Of a merry laugh, whose echo yet thrills
Through the 'Ramble's' groves and miniature
hills

In memory, since that lovely day?—

Oh! who is this lass, my good fellow, say? ”—

“ Dear Jack, she's celestial Miss Jennie Bradshaw.”

IV.

“ Hold on ! ” cried Sol, “ I've a question to ask:
Who was she, pray, in the dark-velvet basque,
That entered the church last evening with you,
And with whom you were seated in Deacon Job's
pew ?

She wore golden curls that shaded a face
Refulgent with heavenly love and grace;
And her eye—an intelligent, beaming gray—
Made cheerful her smile, and winsome her way? ” —
“ Why, Sol! My divinity, Jennie Bradshaw.”

V.

To every query of whom he saw
With me, I would answer: “ Jennie Bradshaw; ”
Whene'er the home-folks asked: “ Whither to-
night? ”

Jennie Bradshaw was the cause of my flight;
In church, at the theatre, or soirée,
On the road, the avenue, or Broadway,
In the Park, at the opera, ever the same—
I always repeated that chosen name,
Responding: "The darling! Miss Jennie Bradshaw."

VI.

Hence, many an unwitting lass received
This innocent christ'ning, and ne'er believed
That thus her charms or faults were united
To Jennie, whom the boys swore I had plighted,
Because, whenever the question was made,
I repeatedly answer'd the self-same maid—
And her name had ever from doubt been free,
But that one sad night, to supper with me
I invited some friends who'd met "Jennie Bradshaw."

VII.

"Jennie Bradshaw has a sweet hazel eye,"
Commenced chum Tom, with a wink and a sigh;
"Not hazel," hints Ned; "you mean a sad black:"
"You're both wrong, boys; it's a soft blue," says
Jack:

"It's gray!" cries Sol; "for I'll never forget
Her pious glance in the church that I met."—

Thus, at my board, the discussion arose,
'Till at length, from mouth to mouth the cry
goes:

“Let’s have a description of Jennie Bradshaw!”

VIII.

“Dear Jennie’s a myth,” I finally spoke:
“There’s no use longer concealing the joke,—
That when my friends have, importunate, tried
To learn the name of the girl at my side,
Or the name of the lass with whom I’ve spent
The morning or eve, evasive I’ve sent
Them all, sincerely believing the same—
That this of my rhyme is my charmer’s name.—
So, boys, fill your bumpers; here’s ‘Jennie Brad-
shaw!’”

IX.

Without drawing the moral my story presents,
I’ll keep you a moment, to say that from thence,
From the night of our supper to this of my
rhyme,
When I’ve been met with a lass, every time
That I leave my door for a quiet call,
I witness a smile, or a laugh in the hall.—
My friends, with a grin or nudge by the way,
Will point to the girl by my side, and say:
“Prolific and charming Miss Jennie Bradshaw!”

XONTIREL REVISED ; h

OR THE GARRET IMP.

Being the Medley of an Opera Bouffe "Artist"—in an ascending scale, of "Five Flats" and a "Sharp."

Suggested (See Note h, Appendix,) by the original XONTIREL, of Professor Sherwood, to whom this Revision is sympathetically inscribed.

PROEM.

My dear old Ned,
So long thou'st plead
For immortality,
I mend thy verse,
(Forfend thy curse!)
And kindly give it thee—

True glory give
By letting live
Thy muse—inspired by beer—
On the same page
Where rum doth rage
And whiskey chanticleer.

Would I might know,
(When read below,
How "highest proof" can prate,)
Rochester lush
And attic mush
Thoul't flee for spirits "straight—"

Henceforth repress
Thy mal-address
 From purely sacred themes;
Nor seek for points,
In opium-joints,
 With which to dress thy dreams;

Me trust to tell
Thy rhyming spell,
 In heaven, thou, or hell;
Thy moods dispel,
Thy kernels shell,
 Thy over bleatings quell;

Yet reproduce,
So may deduce
 The reader, by their smell,
Good liquor 'tis
That makes the fiz
 In which thy songs revel.

TEXT.

P R E L U D E .

A warbling imp escaped, one night,
His keeper's surveillance,
And slid the rails—from the fourth flight,
Where he was lodged (by chance)

In the rooms of the janitress,
And not (as wont) the "bars"
Behind—his "precinct's" choice address
For singing at "the stars."

Eluding thus (his mistress japed,)
His bed—late pressed by dreams
Of elephants, in snake-skins draped,
Aflame at all the seams,
By monkeys and red gnomes bestrode,
A-vomiting green rats,—
Our imp forgot why he abode
Above the first four "flats."

With that insatiate appetite
That never can be soothed,
When tasted once the bottle-sprite
And in his meshes toothed,
Like all Apollo's offspring,
Who think their talents lead
To harrowing a fiddle-string
Or piping on a reed,

Our imp, with gripeful longing, sought
The nearest beer-saloon,
A dozen brimming schooners bought
And stowed in his "galleon;"

Then ambling from the portico
Of that respected school
Where statecraft germs its embryo
And genius apes the fool—

In maudlin state his “hermitage”
Meander’d to regain,
(With the natural advantage
Old toppers oft’ attain,) Arriving (through well-tutored “scent,”)
Upon the very spot
He aimed at—(else by ACCIDENT,
The lode-star of the Sot.)

THE SCORE.

FLAT ONE.

With hands, wild-clutching fore and aft,
He rang at “flat” the first.—
The master, answering, swore—then laughed
To see the plight his thirst,
Unwatched, had got his neighbor in—
Detained him at the door,
And bade him “pull” a flask of gin
Till he could “pull” no more.

FLAT TWO.

Then up the stairs our craving imp
Ascended to the floor
Of number two—where—tired and limp—
He laid him down—to snore;
The lodgers here his slumbers broke,
To ply him with Bourbon—
So long it made him writhe and choke—
Ere frisk'ly urged him on.

FLAT THREE.

With fuddled pace, our imp next came
To landing number three,
So shuffling, like a traveler lame,
A hoodlum peered to see—
His papa told—what brewed the noise,
When he from horn—quite handy,
(Kept ever near to “treat the boys,”)
His guest engorged with brandy.

FLAT FOUR.

Sighing: “Excelsior!” on his road
Our champion marched 'till—Thump!
On loft the fourth, with his mixed load,
He fell—a huddled dump.—
The mistress, here, some Santa Cruz
Invoked to help the cause

Of the martyr brave, who dared abuse
Material's cold laws.

Revived, our hero stumbled—groaned;—
Now fell—and madly kicked;—
Then, flound'ring, cursed; and spat, and moaned;—
Next, lurching, reeled—and licked
His lips, as if a single drop
Lost, might his end defeat—
Not to succumb before the top,
And gravitation cheat.

FLAT FIVE.

Alas! The misery freighting down
Our Imp, at number five,
Outrivalled that of Sabine town
With Roman youth alive,
Or western mart by flood surprised,
Or bathers seized with cramps,
Or cooks with senses first apprised
How fires are lit with lamps.

The Jim-jams' wild delirium
Invaded the fifth "flat"—
Our artist goaded with the hum
Of beetle—mion of cat,

Sad hoots of melancholy owls,
The grating squeal of rats,
The donkey's bray, the tiger's growls,
The buzzing flight of bats.

He picked at bugs—that never crawled;
'Wailed blows—that never struck;
Thought he was swimming—when he sprawled;
His food abhorred—as muck;
His nurse fled from—as a baboon
That burned for his embrace;
The gas-jet bayed at—for the moon;
With witches ran a race.

THE SHARP.

The last, and worst of all the 'plaints
Our tortured imp assailed,
'Mid capers, tantrums, wretched faints—
Most sadly to be wailed;
He thought the Jew, in "flat" the first,
The Frenchman of the second,
Were "English" vampyres—blood athirst—
Who on his corse had reckoned.

The Em'rald lodger, in the third,
The Dutchman in "flat" four,
By British gold he dreamed he heard
Enticed to rasp his gore;—

So he whined: "Tho' bred in Boston,
"I'm not American!
"See! I'm English! For I'm lost on
"The scores of Sullivan!"

Then he'd sing: "I am the Devil!
"I rule the shades of Hell!
"X-O-N-T-I-R-E-L
"Let hence be made to spell
"My name, which shakes the earth and sky—
"Invokes the Demon's cry:
"Rum! Whiskey! Brandy! Gin! We're dry!"
"NELLY! NELL, Oh!—Knell, aye!"

Feb. 18th, 1884.

VII.

* * *

Or satire, musing Damascene,
Hypocri sy lays bare,
And falsehood pricks with blade so keen
That honesty seems fair,
Sweet virtue for a moment blest—
Alike for drones and plods,
Rare truth aroused from stubborn rest—
The scale of justice God's.

* * *

A Poet's Introspect, (Page 19).



AMONG THE RECRUITS. *k*

I.

I donned my hat, when read the news,
And 'mong the soldiers took a cruise.
I crossed the park, where spread the camp—
Recruits heard curse, in quarters cramp—
At mess espied them munch stale pork
And hard-tack, without knife or fork—
Caught speech of distant homes, when wept
A few, whilst others fumed or slept;—
Thence, as from charnel-house, I crept.

II.

Threading, anon, the noisy street,
My sight I doubted when 'twould greet—
The first—Tom Smith, adown whose pants
Coursed a stripe that shocked my glance.
With woeful stare, I scanned his clothes,
Exclaimed: "Poor Tom, where got you those?"
"I signed while fuddled," he replied—
As, waving an adieu, he sighed,
And I, reflective, onward hied.

III.

Before I'd walked another block,
I felt a poke from musket-stock;

And Bradshaw, ever brimming fun,
Hailed me with his burnished gun—
To my grave asking: "What it meant,"
Rejoined: "I hadn't left a cent;
"My business dead, no more could find;
"My pockets empty, fled my mind;
"In fit of sheer despair I signed."

IV.

I wished Jack Bradshaw best of cheer,
And parting—not without a tear,
Had bare renewed my promenade
Ere on my arm a grasp was laid,
And Johnson, *a la militaire*,
Saluted me with pompous air—
Responded to my question why
He left his home—perhaps to die:
"D'ye see these epaulettes, my eye?"

V.

Leaving Johnson, arms akimbo,
Strutting in his hotel window,
I would have sped my way through town,
But was arrested by old Brown.—
Brown has a family and wife—
The last a torment to his life.

Anent I spake, he cried: "From you
Vain to conceal, my wife's a shrew.—
Pray! save enlist, what could I do?"

VI.

After, came Jones—Brown's former clerk—
Embreeched and turban'd like a Turk.
The while I paused, he screwed his eye
As if he might, but would not cry.
His face was pale, his form was bowed,
And on his forehead sate a cloud.
I'd not revert to—well I knew—
What made the fellow look so blue:
Tho' she'd proved false, his love was true!

VII.

Of the many "braves" I've met,
Self-confessed stands each, as yet,
He 'listed desperate or drunk,
From thwarted love or business sunk,
For commission, or subsistence
Or to 'scape a damned existence.—
While breath with smoke or liquor teemed,
He brooding, weak, or thoughtless seemed,
And ne'er of coming battle dreamed.

THE MERCENARY WOMAN. *m*

She seemed so fresh, so bright, so pure,
When first I scanned her face,
I could have sworn—I felt so sure—
Her heart was in its place;
But ere we could our views exchange
On half a dozen themes,
I found she was quite out of range
Of my poetic dreams.

I did imagine hers might be
A sympathetic heart—
Her eyelids drooped so pensively,
So quick the red did start
To cheek and brow whene'er I spake
Of dear domestic things;
She seemed—truth owned—to almost make
Me doubt less she wore wings.

Soft, melting eye, and gentlest tone;
Complexion of the rose;
With bust of Hebe, and such a zone
As waist of nymph might close;
How commonplace they all did seem,
When dropping but a phrase,
She suddenly dispelled my dream—
My momentary daze !

A wretched sentiment, expressed
Through beauty's cherry pout;
A look, when cruelly impressed
On features souls might rout;
An act or movement, to denote
The face is but a mask,
The soft voice but a syren's note—
Who'll my conclusion ask?

My pretty guest did but observe:
"We never could agree;
My style he could not well preserve,
He was so poor, you see."
Yet, that one thought, with its context
Of mercenary pride,
Led me to pray, the woman next
I met, her greed might hide.

Indeed, cracked tones and crippled form,
And features creased with care—
So long as under all glows warm
A heart—seem far more fair
Than faultless figure, mellow strain,
Or dimpled cheek, bright-hued,
A woman masking—cold and vain,
With lucre's thirst imbued.

HE CAN PLAY ON THE PIANO.

He's a dwarfish, curly fellow,
Cannot brew, or baste, or knead,
Plow or reap the fallow mead,
Hoe or plant the yielding seed,
Delve or trade, indite or plead;—
Then,—why thus his presence bellow?

Charon's muses cannot help it;
For know, this bright *icono*
(Like leper in a bagnio,
Or kite on isle guano,) *Has forte*—at the piano.—
“Drown his thrum!” The styx dogs yelp it!

He can play on the piano;
But his list'ners!—Can they bide
Agonizing strains that tide
O'er the keys, where wildly stride
Art's *rare* touches?—They'll decide,
With me: Give praise *morgano*!

ODE TO RICHMOND HILL.*p*

A cozy hamlet—nestling 'mid dwarf hills

And vales of green, where each toy cot doth vie
With its companion, the perspective fills,

To bring a welcome contrast to the eye
Long Island's stretch and glare of plain so tire;—

Behold the site of calculation's choice,
To court from crowded mart—to buy or hire—
With least assistance from a broker's voice!

Dread Ague's Home! Your charms had often broke

My dull, flat ride through Nassau's hungry sands,
Upon its tramway famed for dusts that choke,

And gift of enterprise that understands
The art of making human holocausts

And changing schedules without note or rule.—
Ah! Spite of heads (that warned) of deeper frosts,
You caught my eye, and sold me for a fool!

Six weeks of fatal dreaming o'er a vale

'Mid Richmond's hills, that picturesquely rise,
Gave me experience to tell a tale

Illustrative of how e'en nature lies—
How not by word of lip alone, or sign,

May man, or beast, or reptile cheat the sense;
But how earth's surface, when its garb divine,
May breed malaria and pestilence.

Oh ! mad'ning headache, never felt before !

Chills—creeping first the spine, to later tear
Through ev'ry fibre—to the body's core,

Each limb and member, organ, tooth and hair
Astounding with a shake that, quiv'ring, leaps

So wildly and convulsively, the frame
Seems but a puppet, which the Ague keeps,
To dance o'er ice—then cast abrupt in flame !

Ere the last flicker—the expiring rasp—

From arctic waves hath fled its victim's groan,
The vice of fever closes with a grasp

Of hot malevolence, and seeks the bone
Beneath to crisp, while yet the flesh intact—

To hang, and draw, and quarter, 'fore the breath
Be quite expired—to keep the joints enwracked,
Brain fired, and ev'ry sense imploring death !

False Richmond Hill ! Of earth—delusive Hell !

Let artists hover near, and hue thee well ;
Let agents advertise thy charms, and tell

How balm thy clear ozone—how cheap to dwell
Where ev'ry room with water, where the bell

For school and service echoes through the dell !—
Praise God, who kindly bade me say : Farewell
To thee, ere prematurely rung my knell !

Praise God for the incendiary torch
That lighted me from malady to health!
What reck, tho' lit by him Hell's fires now scorch,
Since guiding me from misery to wealth?—
What tho' devoured my work of toilsome years,
Since lost, therewith, the errors age might
shame?—
Aye! Well destroyed youth's labor, traced with
tears—
Dried by reflection's due contempt for fame!

*

*

*

Have you an enemy whose blood you'd still
With poisons leading slowly to the grave?—
With viruses accurse the life, then kill
By agency so sinister the brave—
In war—of it have greater dread than steel?—
Guide him upon the road that flaunts the bill:
“Cheap homes!” His optics fascinate! The wheel
Of speculation's grist—at Richmond Hill—
Allure him 'neath! And gloat how he shall feel
When lapsing into FEVER from a CHILL.

GREAT GOD, LITTLE MAN. *q*

It is the Hour—through its analogies—that brings
Us closely home, to-day, with History's page, on
wings

Electric—heralding afar, from clime to clime,
How fitly wild ambition may succumb to crime—
The story, hoar, reviving of man's errant life
Weighed with the microbes in his bitter, mimic
strife

To shape events and ends—to wield the sword of
Fate.—

Again we hear the tocsin sounding—always late,
Tho' oft'nèst rung: Naught, save Jehovah, can be
Great !

He only marshals Nature, Sequence and the State !

July 2, 1881.

SACREDLY INVESTED.

A MILLION DOLLARS!—They would yield,
At four per cent, (the ruling rate
Since Billionaires have won “the field”
From freedom’s sway, and mold the State,)
Forty thousand dollars yearly—
Tho’ said principal now bears naught
Save that piety which, queerly,
Thinks “put,” “call,” and “straddle” bought
For “futures” can be, in GOD’S TEMPLE.

THE CONGREGATION must have deemed
Their Million well invested, since
The *Sal’ry* of their *Mouthpiece* seemed
A bagatelle—altho’ a Prince
Whose titles (in more than one land)
Are at a discount, would be glad
Of *per annum Twenty Thousand*
Him to save from the VERY BAD.—
AN ELEEMOOSINARY SAMPLE.

Then, again, the *Undertaker*,
(And his satellites—the ushers,)
“Classic” choir, and organ-slaker,
And that band of milk-and-mushers

Yclept as "trustees," "deacons," "elders,"
 With the sev'ral "incidentals"—
 Not omitting the waste gilders
 Charged to "*tracts*" and "fundamentals,"—
 Make SALVATION quite a GAMBLE.

Calculate the problem, slowly:—
 Ninety thousand dollars, you'll find,
 Mark the "chips" so high, the LOWLY—
 (If they think the Eyes of God blind
 By the spire gold has erected,
 Or from heaven all save pew own.
 As from church, by saints ejected—)
 View their "chance" a very rue one.—
 So the humble, Sundays, ramble.

"Pshaw! Damn the humble! Why heed we
 Misery, hunger, want or thirst
 Out of wealth's pale?"—Gold speaking thus, 'curst
 Deems his priest faith meek, barefooted,
 And God's Ministry, 'neath sky's dome—
 'Curst all piety not rooted,
 Hard and cold, to the stones that tomb
 Hundreds now dead
 For want of bread!
 Hymns he: "Scramble! All's a gamble!"

TO MY CRITIC.

Are you, whose pen would annotate a text of mine,
By judgment guided one whit riper—more divine
Than other men's?

Whose gift the better to select,
Than you, the words should dress your thought?
Would you reflect
My moods, then, or my whims?

Sooth grant, with my sense none
Can phrase or weld accordantly as I have done,
Since no machine doth work like mine of Jove's in-
voice—
Or will, so long as Procreation's Pow'rs rejoice.

My mold distinct from your's as David's from St
Mark's—
As Milton's from Dean Swift's, or Scott's or Jared
Sparks'—
As Byron's, Bolingbroke's, or Goldsmith's from
Montaigne's —
As Pope's, or Sheridan's, or Lamb's from G. F.
Train's—

As Bulwer's, or as Thackeray's from Joaquin Mil-
ler's,

Or any prosing screed's, or rhyming caterpillar's—
Of all the medley memory may nimbly trill,
From Clio's phalanx, life and legend leave us still.

Therefore, my bent no worldling may presume en-
join

To change old words, remodel new, or phrases coin
From my impress, to give a glimmer of the loin
The brain, called mine, doth guide, or brain my
loin doth run—

(No matter where to end, or wherefore either
spun,)

The loin and brain my lot—than those of other men
More true to me—of equal use and worth, I ken,
To the Occasion First, the Cause of them and me,
Or Aim that squirms life's puppets in the span or sea
Of Jove's Infinitude.

To me, at least, mine bring
More pleasure than from other web or woof may
spring—

More certainly than his whose pastime is to sting,
And not to heal, the suffering sense—of blunders
ring

The birth—for festers root—for flowers snuff that
stale—

For stenchs grope and ferret—balms refuse in-
hale.—

Such will full tribute pay his morbid spleen's de-
mand—

His humid exudations spread with rancorous hand
O'er my free pages, tributary to his brand
Not less than to the reader who shall, keen, descry
Herein a target for grim satire's mockery;
Or to the heart, indulgent, smiles, or laughs in glee
At conning stanzas that affect it mirthfully;
Or to responsive thought, from which my verse
shall call

Forth grateful echoes; or to currents, found in all
So varying with humors, circumstances, years,
They'll move some to reflection, some to jests, some
sneers.

Alas! Sir Gloatful Critic? How could you survive,
Except, behold! the opportunities arrive
(As, now and then, rash amateurs rush into print,)
To pen your variations on the threadbare hint—
Your theme: “A book's a book, altho' there's noth-
ing in't?”

Indeed, so often troped and cited, without stint,
By you this pregnant judgment on the unfledged
scribe
Dare brook your with'ring censure, stricture, glance
or gibe,
'Twould be your blazoned motto, and surmount
your crest
If heraldry had not been flouted, put to rest
With other barb'rous relics of earth's feudal age,
As critics will be, in the next, who carp and rage
Amid the scandals mark our growing daily page.

Meanwhile, Jove save your shadow for the place it
fits—
As truly your's as clown's or drudge's, bard's or
wit's
Are their's respectively. As dear, as due, your
right
As an appendix to my mime of Pean's flight
To hang your knotted lash, as my own restless
boy's
To tail the Japan hawk with which he, sportive,
toys,—
Especially, since each his plaything so enjoys

To see cavorting in the winds that sweep the sky—
The boy, because he'd have his captive soar and fly
Beyond the stars—if storms might wait and cord
might last;

And you, my critic, that a gale might swell—to
blast

Your kite, and drive it earthward—to be thrust
Mid' briars, or swamps, or stones, or trampled in
the dust.

My conscience frank and free, contentedly I wait
Each new diversion, frown, crank, freak or turn of
fate—

As I have humbly, hap'ly learned to do, of late,
Invoking Jove may suffer you to wisely rate
My Lays, as they shall merit, in His broad estate—
Assessed and taxed, according as they may belong
To marsh or fallow—with His harvest land along,
Or rankling His salt-meadow—and not worth a
song.



NOTES.

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- a. (Page 32.) First printed in the *American Art Journal*, September 17, 1881.
- b. (Page 54.) "MY SPRING IS HERE" was first published in the *N. Y. Daily Graphic*, March 22, 1884.
- c. (Page 72.) This poem originally appeared in the *American Art Journal*, June 25, 1881. With the exceptions noted below (and a few others unnecessary to here particularize), "MY SANCTUM" is the author's earliest metrical essay contained in these pages. Its interest may, possibly, seem confined to his surroundings, or personal to his situation, at the time of its appearance—when his offices (as well Sanctum, or study,) pleasantly faced Union Square on the west.
- A congenial neighbor, at the period referred to, was Mr. Thoms, the proprietor of the *Art Journal*—to whose publication "MY SANCTUM" was naturally contributed.
- d. (Page 80.) "IN MEMORIAM" was an impromptu (tho' very inadequate) tribute to the memory of Miss Alice C. Earl, formerly Secretary to the author, who died, of hereditary consumption, on September 11th, 1884, and whose obsequies were observed from her late home, in Newark, N. J., on the 14th of the same month. Within two years prior to her decease, both of Miss Earl's parents had succumbed to the same dread malady; so that her death may be said to have been pre-determined, no less than premature.
- f. (Page 114.) This trifle was originally published in 1865—tho' among the earliest of the writer's essays at versification; and it is now accessible through its having been cut from print and preserved in the scrap-book collection of a friend.
- g. (Page 145.) "JENNIE BRADSHAW," produced first in the *N. Y. Weekly Mercury*, in June, 1861, is accessible under circumstances similar to those last above mentioned.

h. (Page 149.) "XONTIREL REVISED,"—a purely local, if not personal, *jeu d'esprit*, first printed (in part) in the *Art Journal*, in February, 1884—was filed by the author with his "translations," and omitted (as of that class) from the first edition of his *LAYS*. His small constituency ("friends") have insisted it to be too valuable an emendation of the original *Beor-legh*, however, to be sacrificed; and in deference to their judgment, it is preserved. Of Professor Sherwood's feet (or feat) in the genuine Saxon *Beor-geurit*, our version claims to be simply a crude "adaptation" (to employ the broadest term qualifying changes from a rhythmical ancient dialect into our modern discordant American slang.) The following is the original "XONTIREL," as it appeared (before our "Revision") in the *Rochester (N. Y.) Union and Advertiser*:

XONTIREL.

A POEM OF FIVE FLATS.

BY EDGAR H. SHERWOOD

A sprite of curiosity,

We will call him Xontirel,
Took a tumble from the sky one night,
As we propose to tell;
Alighting near a block *moderne*,
Where household gods abound,
He entered at the portals,
Just to have a look around.

FIRST FLAT.

Ah! what a sight here met his gaze,
Of brilliance and of light,
Of Dudes and Dudesses in force,
All in *pure English* plight;
Taking just a peep at these,
Through a comprehensive glance,
He passes to the flight above
To see—what next, perchance,

SECOND FLAT.

Dispers't through mellow-lighted rooms,
Of curious wares suggesting tombs,
He found a most confusing mass,
Of furniture and ancient glass.
There, in one niche, prone on his back,
The collector of this bric-a-brac,
Lay slumbering in a mummy case,
Marked: "*English, as all else of Grace.*"

THIRD FLAT.

A scene more common than the last
Attracted Xontirel;
The furnishing was plain Eastlake,
Though mostly worn quite well;
But the people were the feature here,
And all so *English*, too,
For they spake, as alone New Yorker
can,
Of the presumptive "parvenu,"

FOURTH FLAT

The last but one of all these flights
 Presents a compo-mix;
 St. Louis folks, with alleged feet,
 Chicagoans, with their chics,
 And many others congregate,
 Alle same Melican man,
 Biding their opportunity
 To be as *English* as they can.

FIFTH FLAT.

The sprite has almost gone his rounds;
 He nears the attic high,
 But pauses at one lonely door,
 As he hears a dubious sigh;
 'Tis a cultured, and a Boston man,
 Classleal, gifted and wan,
 Earnestly toiling to make a score
 A la Gilbert and Sullivan.

FEB. 13th, 1884.

Our revision of the fore-going *Beor* wail is so literal that (like the aloc, which now enters so extensively into all *Beor* "compo-mixtures,") it retains idioms (or properties) inseparable from the primitive text.

It would be impossible to *fairly* elucidate "XONTIREL," or its "Revision" by notes; and there is no space in an octavo edition for diagrams, which could alone do justice to a *walj* of such vague general proportions. It may be doubtful, again, if the paroxysm of a ten minutes revisional gripe, after dinner, *should* be annotated, except (in the present instance) to indicate the correlation of the agonized retch:—'Nelly! Nell, oh!'—in the last line of the "Revision," to the distressed condition of the "gifted and wan" occupant of the fifth flat, in the original *Beor-legh*.

It is to be hoped the following ditty (omitted from previous editions of these LAYS,) may answer for the author's final postscript to "XONTIREL REVISED"—as well as a judicious substitute for all notes (past, present or now possibly gestatory,) in the premises:

VEUVE CLIQUOT.

Some thirly years, or more, ago,
 I used to wield the cue;
 And when my game appeared to "slow,"
 I "stalled" to win, bet you!
 But once upon that ancient time,
 I carromed up in Wayne;

And tho' I was in "practice" prime,
 I chose to lose—than gain.
 For stakes were "rounds," and with each
 "hack"
 I lost came "*Veuve Cliquot*;"
 But every time I "swept the track"
 'Twas slush a tramp would "whoa!"

And when old Xontirel now drives	If Xon could lager's qualms forego
His cue or quill, one's crammed	For wholesome draughts, and trim
With "Beer"—by which the grave-yard	His verse and jcue with "Veuve Cliquot"
thrives—	I'D DRINK AGAIN WITH HIM!
If I can drink, I'm damned!	

k. (Page 159.) "AMONG THE RECRUITS" was published in the N. Y. *Sunday Times*, in the summer of 1861, when the fever of patriotism burned at so high a degree that it was deemed a necessary precaution, by the manager of that paper, to editorially disavow all responsibility for its expressions. A few incidents to its appearance (which might be historically interesting and pertinent, in other connections,) it is not required to detail here.

The rhymes (for they may, at least, be so designated,) annotated *f*, *g* and *k*, are (with the exception of his first metrical composition—in August, 1856,) the author's only attempt at versification prior to 1881, which have been preserved. The exception parenthesized—called "THE MISSION PRIEST"—was printed in the *Mercury*, of which the literary department was conducted by Mr. Newell (Orpheus C. Ker,) in 1861. Indeed, with these exceptions, all the earlier offspring of the author's muse (as well as prose manuscript, and the plans or germs of verse,) were destroyed by conflagration, in the month of April, 1878. His verses, at that time lost, were a small part of the writer's accumulated work—literature having been formerly his avocation for a livelihood. These statements are made, not in any mood of regret, but as matters of fact—to which may be added: With the three exceptions above indicated, the verses contained in this volume are published—as they were written—for the author's personal diversion, as will (or may have been) inferred from their tone and substance, or their want of either or both. And with the exceptions annotated, none of the verses herein contained have ever before appeared in published form or print.

With the present edition of his LAYS, (in answer to the flattering requests of friends, to reproduce some of his lost earlier poems,) the author would observe that he can not accurately replace any of his juvenile ventures from memory; nor is he qualified to do so by the

same moods in which he was found at the time of their inspiration, or conception (as the case may be.) Printed below are the earliest of the author's verses now accessible. "THE MISSION PRIEST"—their title—was (with three exceptions, which were destroyed,) the writer's first metrical essay. All his literary work (of any importance,) as well as his earlier manuscript product, which had not been "put in type"—in course of ten years preceeding the fire already referred to, was lost by that catastrophe, and as his published essays (marketed prior to 1868,) were of the "hand to mouth" quality, there was little saved—while God knows if there may not have been as little sacrificed—worth saving; and as the author never published, or made overtures for publication (with a single exception, exclusive of those annotated,) of any of his verses, his labor of the period from 1868 to 1878 was lost. It may not seem inappropriate for the writer to confess, at this point, to having most seriously felt the loss of two metrical compositions—one entitled "MY RICHEST RELATION," and the other an un-named Burlesque in rhyme, both having had the happy effect of moving with genuine mirth his own little circle, which included—to say the least—keen observers and veritable cosmopolites. Among the author's poems that afforded, in their day, some edification to his comrades, (whatever may have been the merit or demerit of his muse or companions,) were: "THE HYPOCRITE", originally sketched (tho' not submitted,) for an academic commencement exercise; "THE OARS-MAN'S SONG"; "CAMP SALLIE"; "THE COLONEL", and others of which only snatches can be recalled. Tho' not printed till 1861, "THE MISSION PRIEST" was composed in August, 1856; and it is here repeated for no value it may possess beyond serving as a sample (to those who have seemed friendly interested) of the author's first drifting upon rhyme. These verses were accepted by Mr. Newell (before mentioned) for the weekly *Mercury*—a publication subsequently abandoned. And it may be pertinent to their reappearance, in this place to say: Tho' nearly a quarter of a century has elapsed since his last meeting Mr. Newell, their writer has not lost remembrance of that gentleman's courteous treatment and kind encouragement (in the interviews of a brief acquaintance,) of his crude early wooing of the Muses.

THE MISSION PRIEST.

Where the river coursed o'er its crytal bed—
Tow'rd the sea, yet clear as at fountain-head—
And the heavens above were blue and bright
From lark-sung dawn to the still of night,
On a slope of the mountain's morning face—
High over the stream that wound its base—
A Christian priest, at his isolate health—
Afar from the land of his love and birth—
Look'd forth, from his cabin—on either side
Of which grew a forest, to ocean-tide.

Here, where the beast and the savage roamed wild,
Our priest, with his wife and infant child,
Remote from the haunts of civilized men,
Planted his home, overhanging the glen
That swarmed with primitive creeds, and abode—
Instructing, from scriptural text, the code
Of Christ, diffusing its tenets, brief,
Of love and hope, in exalted relief,
Till a legion spread from the mountain crest,
Of men to whom charity's faith gave rest.

Science and Art, with Religion apace,
Were fostered and flourished, among this race ;
They garden'd the country, for leagues around,
With fruits that in tropical climes abound,
And dwelt in homes of enjoyment and peace,
Content their barbarous age to release
For tranquil and orderly Christian life—
Exempt from the eager and cruel strife
They had once pursued, with a brutal hand,
Through the forest wilds of a pagan land.

When, anon, the priest had waxed feeble, and aged,
 And tokens of failing his rev'ries engaged,
 He called a son, yet unskilled and untried,
 To train for the fallow—when he may have died,
 To insure that the work of his mission might grow—
 In the struggle of truth, for compassing woe—
 In the cause of the faith himself had taught,
 And through life's pilgrimage fearlessly fought.—
 So the work of cross progressed until done,
 And the cause of the Mission was bravely won.

To-day great cities, from mountain to coast,
 Extend, that—proud—their enlightenment boast,
 Vaunting the traits which enoble our race,
 Yielding men charity, dignity, grace.—
 Of the savage tribes, with their pagan creeds,
 Or the wilds that teemed with their cruel deeds,
 We find no longer a trace on the spot
 Where, whilom, appeared the lone mission-cot.—
 God prosper the work of the Mission-chief,
 And honor his labor, patience, belief!

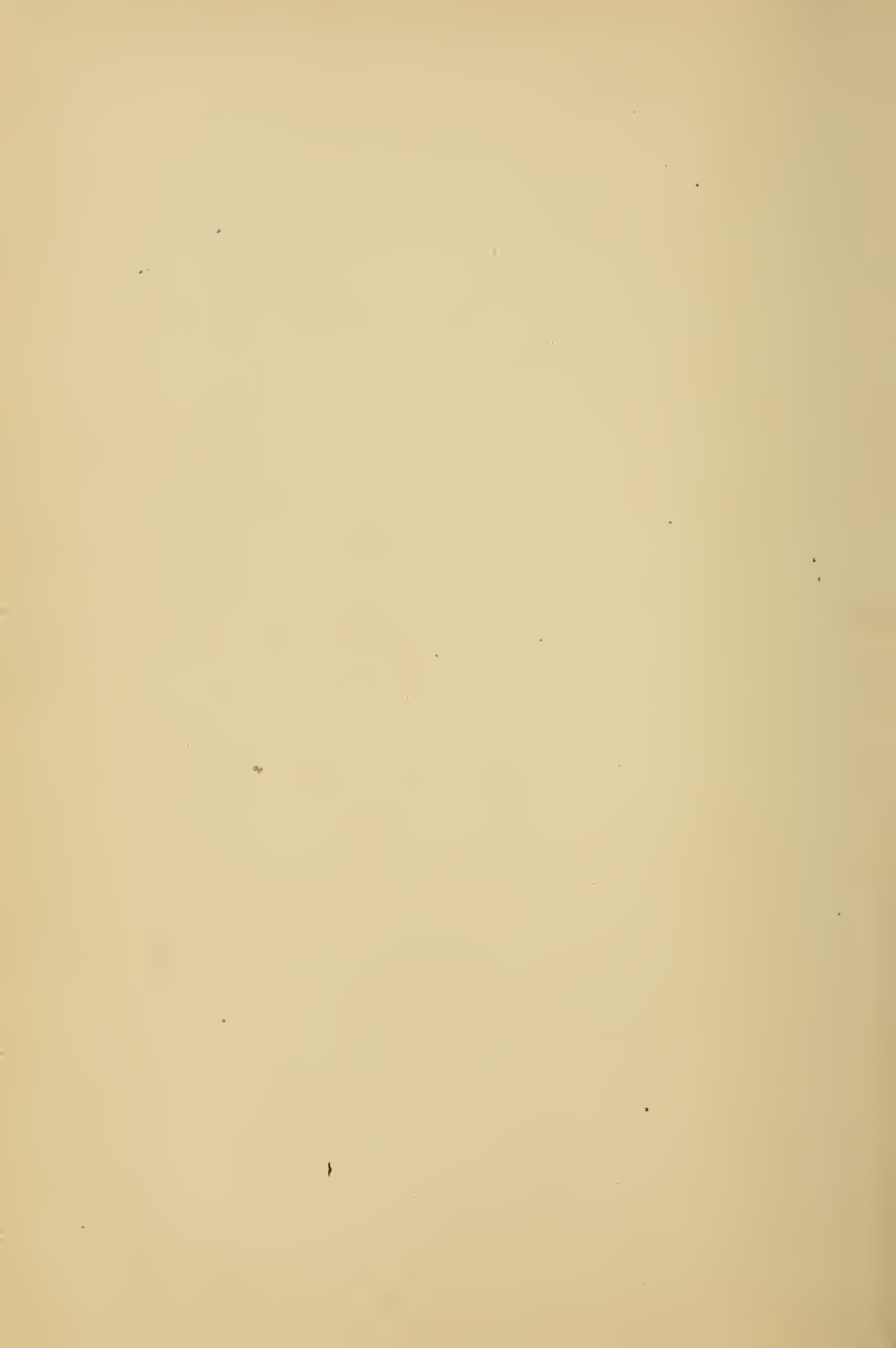
m. (Page 162.) "THE MERCENARY WOMAN" first appeared in the *American Art Journal*, of December 10, 1881.

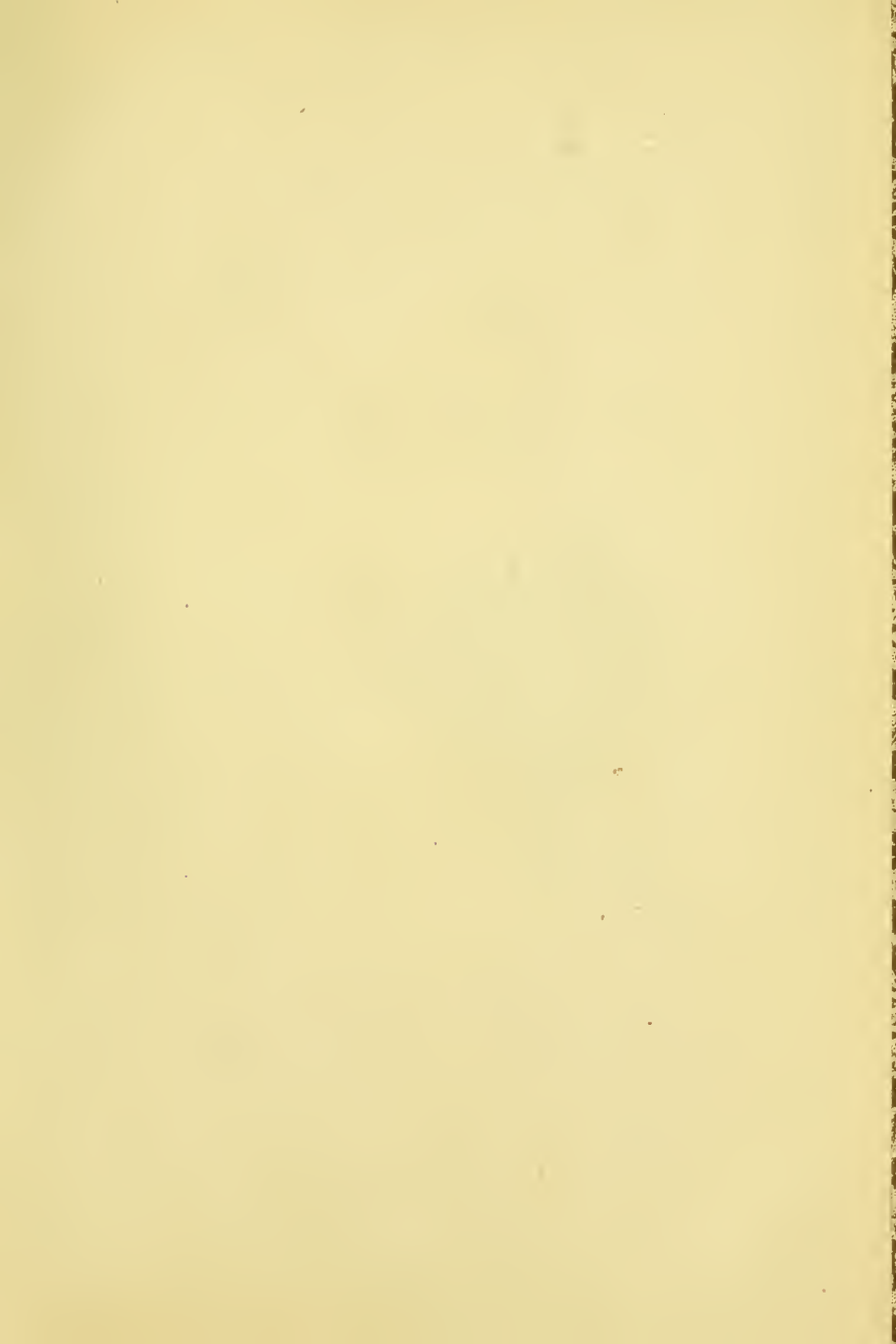
p. (Page 165.) The "ODE TO RICHMOND HILL" (Long Island's fever and ague focus), which was omitted from the first edition of these LAYS, is here included, to gratify the suggestions of friends that the author should denote the circumstance owing to which his collection is wanting of verses that formerly invited their kind interest and criticism.

The circumstance is indicated in the seventh stanza of this ODE, referring to the incident of the Fire, in April, 1878, when, by the torch of an INCENDIARY, the writer was despoiled of a choice library, a number of valuable literary souvenirs, and the fruit of nearly ten years' labor with his pen. The severe experience of this calamity has been more than compensated, however, by his escape from farther ravages (than had attended his experience at

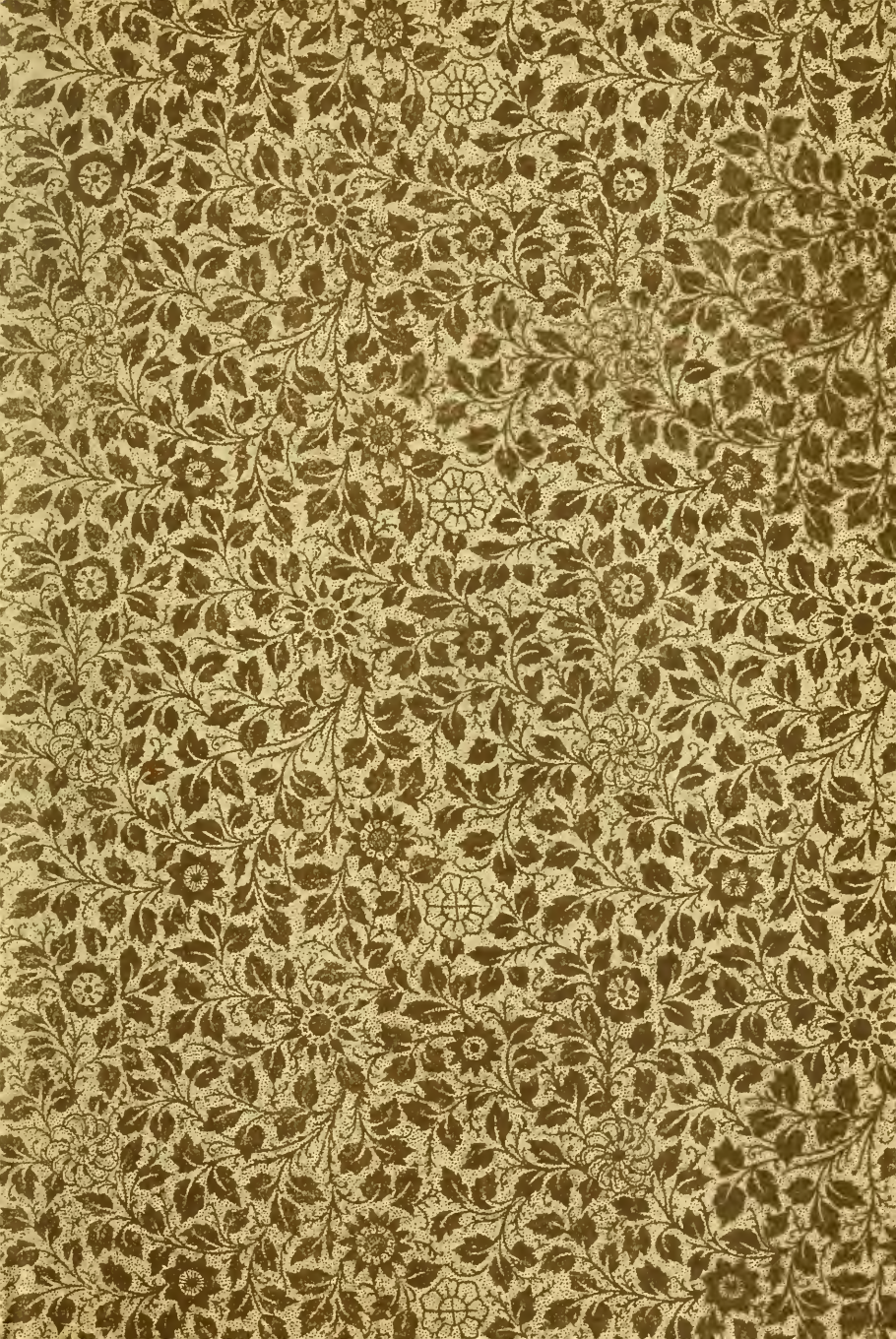
Richmond Hill, in the course of two years immediately preceding,) from the most *malign disorder* that ever afflicted the human or brute anatomy. The reader who has survived a domicile upon soil to which the *Fever and Ague* is indigenous—where the seeds of malaria are fixed by Divine Decree, and propagated by natural causes—can appreciate the inspiration of the author's muse, tho' faintly sung his gratitude to God, at having survived a residence at Richmond Hill

q (Page 168.) Impromptu lines upon hearing the announcement of President Garfield's assassination, July 2, 1881.

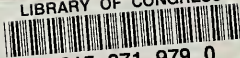








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